

THE
PILLAR AND GROUND
OF THE
TRUTH

REV. THOMAS E. COX

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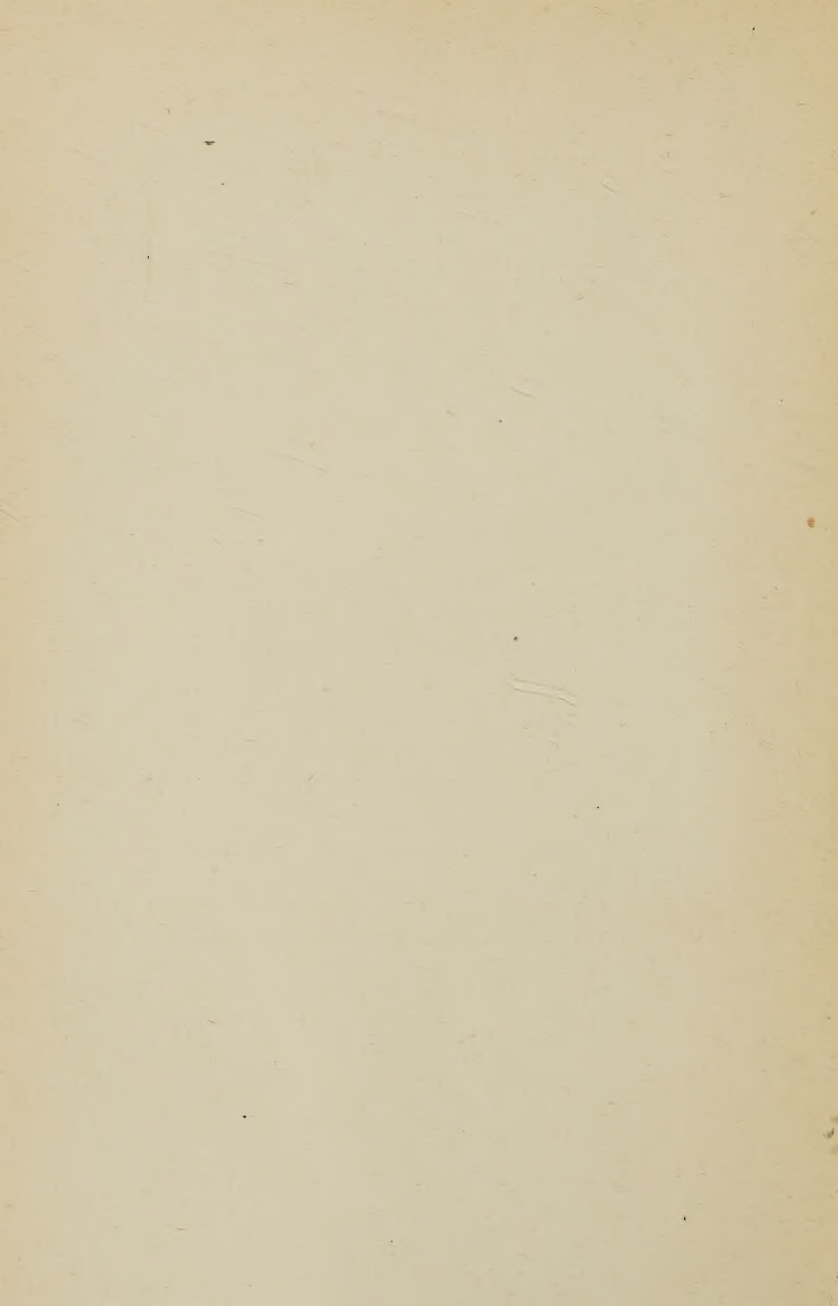
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CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY BULLETIN
Washington, D. C., April, 1901

A REVIEW OF

"The Pillar and Ground of the Truth"

From the pen of the VERY REV. CHARLES P.
GRANNAN, S. T. D.

Dean of the Divinity School, and Professor of Sacred Scripture
at the Catholic University of America.

The Pillar and Ground of the Truth. A Series of
Lenten Lectures on the True Church, its Marks and
Attributes. REV. THOMAS E. COX. Chicago: J. S.
HYLAND & Co., 1900; 12 mo., pp. 256. Price, \$1.

The present volume by Father Cox contains seven long lectures on the Church and on the notes by which she may be recognized as the Spouse of Christ. They treat of the Existence, the Unity, the Holiness, the Catholicity, the Apostolicity, the Infallibility, and the Indefectibility of the Church. These notes are some of the ornaments with which Christ has adorned His Bride, the tokens by which she may be known as His, even in the midst of innumerable rival claimants. Though often discussed before, these notes of the true Church need to be presented for the first time to each new generation of Christians, and to each generation they need to be presented from a new point of view, and from every point of view. For a clear idea of what the Church is and of her claims on the conscience of Christians is a matter of fundamental importance in every course of religious instruction to Catholics, and especially to converts. Her claims once established, all else follows as a matter of course, and the ordinary Christian may logically, and without further inquiry, accept the entire body of Catholic doctrine when proposed by the Church as to be believed because revealed. The present volume is interesting both for the matter and for the form.

Father Cox has evidently studied his theme so thoroughly as to have acquired a strong grasp on it in all its bearings. He is thus able to separate the essential from the accidental, to omit or to subordinate the latter, and to present the former in bold outline. He is also master of a style admirably adapted to the purpose of exposition. In the beginning of every lecture, by means of definition, obverse iteration, and other devices familiar to the skillful expositor, he clears the ground for the subsequent discussion of the topics in detail. The real question at issue is thus made to stand out alone and in bold relief on the mental horizon, stripped of all such accessory details as would draw away the attention of the reader from the main point under consideration. His purpose seems to be not only that the reader may, but that he must, understand what is said.

A fair sample of this method is found in the lecture on Infallibility (p. 188), where he says:

"Perhaps the right definition of Infallibility will be best reached if we begin by telling what it is not. Infallibility is not omniscience, is not revelation, is not inspiration, is not impeccability, is not inerrancy merely consequent."

Then, in as many short paragraphs, he shows what is meant by each of these words, after which (p. 192), he shows positively what Infallibility is.

Every sentence is terse, complete in itself, and as well-rounded and compact as a bullet. The weight of thought in each is distinctly and severally felt, because the ideas are not too long drawn out and the sentences are not allowed to sprawl about the page. One need not read far to see with what dispatch, how thoroughly, and once for all he disposes of weighty notions in a single paragraph. Appropriate quotations from Sacred Scripture abound, and illustrations drawn from every variety of modern sources. It is a book which the clergy and the laity may read with pleasure and profit.

CHARLES P. GRANNAN.



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Thomas C. Cox

THE
PILLAR AND GROUND
OF THE
TRUTH

A SERIES OF LENTEN LECTURES

ON THE

TRUE CHURCH

ITS MARKS AND ATTRIBUTES

BY REV. THOMAS E. COX

Author of "Biblical Treasury of the Catechism."

CHICAGO:
J. S. HYLAND & COMPANY
1900

IMPRIMATUR:

+ PATRICK A. FEEHAN,
ARCHBISHOP OF CHICAGO.

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PREFACE.

THE chapters which make up this volume were delivered originally as a series of Lenten Lectures in the Church to which the author is attached. The text, taken down in shorthand at delivery, has since been diligently revised, and some of the phrases incident to direct address have been eliminated. The Scriptural quotations, which are conspicuously abundant, have all been verified and the references placed at the end of each chapter. As far as possible, due credit has been given for the words quoted from others.

The tokens of appreciation on the part of large numbers who listened to these lectures, the requests of a few whose opinions deserve respect, and the words of a recent reviewer (*Catholic World*, August, 1900), who says, "There seems to be a constant demand for sermon literature," and who praises "a plentiful use of the Sacred Scripture," because "There is about the words

of Holy Writ a sacramental value," — all give encouragement and confidence in submitting this work to the public.

The topics treated of here stand in need of no apology. As themes they may be trite and threadbare enough from usage, but they cannot lose their importance with time. Every earnest mind wants to know about the things spoken of in these chapters.

Doubtless in their present presentation, stripped of the drapery of oral delivery, and minus voice and gesture and the subtle influences which have their source in audiences rather than in orators, these lectures will seem bare and stiff to those who heard them at first.

I shall be satisfied, however, if, in the present form, my words serve in any degree to revive or intensify the knowledge and love of truth among Catholic readers, or to make any one feel more at home "in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

T. E. C.

September 20th, 1900.

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I.

THE CHURCH.

ITS IDEA, EXISTENCE, AUTHORITY AND
VISIBILITY.

THE CHURCH.

ITS IDEA, EXISTENCE, AUTHORITY AND VISIBILITY.

"Calling together the twelve apostles, he gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God." Luke 9:1, 2.

"And upon this rock I will build my church." Matt. 16:18.

"Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations: . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." Matt. 28:18-20.

"If he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." Matt. 18:17.

"Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array?" Cant. 6:9.

* * * * *

On a former occasion, I preached from this pulpit a series of discourses on "The True Religion." At that time I tried to prove, by arguments drawn from the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers, from literature and profane history, as well as from the needs of human nature and the dictates of right reason, the following propositions:—

(a) Every rational creature is morally bound to profess and practice some sort of religion;

(b) All men are morally bound to embrace one and the same religion;

(c) The religion to which all men are obliged to adhere is a supernatural, revealed religion; and

(d) The general name of that religion is Christianity.

In the present series of sermons, I desire to come to closer quarters on this momentous matter. I propose to speak to you at this time on the true Church, "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth,"¹ which is the organ

and embodiment of true religion. In the first place, I wish to convey a correct notion of what is meant by the Church, to explain the essential nature of it, to prove the fact of its existence, its authority, and its visibility. Subsequently I shall endeavor to point out its marks and essential attributes, so that its name, nature and identity will become so evident that every one who knows how to reason must recognize and acknowledge it as the sole exponent of the true religion.

I sincerely hope that my words may redound to God's glory, and to the lasting good of all present; that those of you who are already members of the Church may be stimulated more and more to study her history, to inquire deeper into her doctrines and discipline, to the end that, having carefully considered her titles to your respect, you may grow daily in love and devotion towards your spiritual Mother. And I pray Almighty God that those of you who have not yet the happiness of belonging to the Church may, once for all, cast aside every unworthy prejudice, and give to a matter of such personal importance a sober, serious consideration. As responsible,

rational beings, you know that we must account for the use or abuse of our reason on this as on every other subject that demands our attention. Apply your reason, then, to the things which I shall set forth, and follow the convictions of a sincere conscience enlightened by truth. God is calling us all to the one true fold. The Shepherd of souls is still seeking His sheep. "To-day if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts." ²

I have one favor to ask of you all at this season. I hope that you will be more than usually assiduous in your prayers. God gives special graces at special times, and this is a season of great grace. Pray for the progress of truth everywhere, and for the success of the sermons here. Pray "for me, that speech may be given me, that I may open my mouth with confidence, to make known the mystery of the gospel, . . . so that therein I may be bold to speak according as I ought." ³ For whatsoever good my words or those of others may appear to produce, will really result more from sincere prayer than from anything that we shall say. "Unless the Lord build the house,

they labour in vain that build it.”⁴ Paul may plant, and Apollo water, but it is God alone “that giveth the increase.”⁵

* * * * *

The word “Church” is the English equivalent of the Latin *ecclesia*. The Latin word *ecclesia* comes from the Greek verb *ekkalein*, which means “to call forth.” The members of the Church, therefore, have received a vocation, a calling to enter its fold. The Church is not denominated a synagogue, as in the Old Law, for the word “synagogue” means “a driving together.” It is more becoming a rational creature to be called than to be compelled.

The word Church has a diversity of usages. Sometimes it is employed in an evil sense, as when the Psalmist says, “I have hated the church of the malignant.”⁶ Sometimes it is used in a good sense, as when “the church of the saints”⁷ is spoken of. Sometimes it is used in an indifferent sense, “Let them exalt him in the church of the people.”⁸ Sometimes it is used in a local or particular sense, “the church which is in their house,”⁹ and sometimes in a general

or universal sense, "the church of the living God." ¹⁰ By a figure of speech, in which the container is put for the thing contained, we call the house or building that contains the faithful the Church. Again, according as we consider its subjects abiding here on earth and battling for heaven, or as still expiating the remains of sin in the place of purgation, or as having already reached their reward, the word has various applications and extensions. The Church on earth is called the Church Militant; the Church in Purgatory, the Church Suffering; the Church in Heaven, the Church Triumphant.

Moreover, the Church on earth can be viewed in each of its three historical phases: (*a*) as it existed in the beginning of the human race, in paradise, and later under the patriarchs,—in the state of the law of nature; (*b*) as it existed still later under the Mosaic dispensation, when, the law of nature having become confused in the minds of men, so that they no longer saw clearly what was right and what was wrong, God re-enacted for them in written commands the dictates of His will; (*c*) as it exists to-day under the

Christian dispensation, which is the law of grace, following and fulfilling the law of Moses,—“ (For the law brought nothing to perfection,) but a bringing in of a better hope.”¹¹ Hence we can speak of the Church under the *law of Nature*, under the *law of Moses*, and under the *law of Christ*.

Finally, the Church of Christ can be considered in a twofold aspect. It contains within itself a body of clergy which has the office of instructing and ruling, called the Church teaching, or the Church governing. The Apostles represented this body, and to them were addressed the words of our Lord, “To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.”¹² Again, in the Gospel of St. Matthew, when our Lord, speaking of the erring brother, says, “If he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican,”¹³ He refers to the Church ruling, teaching, deciding. The Church has, likewise, a body, the laity, who are taught, who listen and obey, called the Church hearing, or the Church obeying. To this body St. Paul speaks in these words, “Obey your prelates, and

be subject to them.”¹⁴ And when, addressing the Bishops of Ephesus, he says, “Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood,”¹⁵ he signifies again the Church governed. The distinction between clergy and laity is clearly marked where the same Apostle says, “We are God’s coadjutors: you are God’s husbandry.”¹⁶ But when he speaks of his own unworthiness to be called an apostle, alleging his reason, “because I persecuted the church of God,”¹⁷ he includes both the ruling and the obeying Church.

The Church of Christ was prefigured in the Old Law by many types and symbols,—by the terrestrial paradise, from which man was to be translated into heaven; by Eve, who was brought forth from the side of Adam, as the Church from the sacred side of Christ crucified; by the ark of Noah, into which were gathered all those who were to be saved from the general deluge; by the Jewish race, favored by Almighty God and conducted into the promised land; by the city of

Jerusalem,¹⁸ the city of God; by the temple of Jerusalem,¹⁹ the dwelling place of God; by the stone cut out of a mountain without hands, that struck against the idols of the world and shattered them to pieces, while itself continued to grow until it filled the whole earth.²⁰

In the New Testament the Church is symbolized by the bark of Peter,²¹ from which our Lord taught the multitudes; by the sheet or vessel which Peter saw in his mid-day dream, containing all manner of living things, let down from heaven,²² and by the coat of our Lord, the tunic without seam.²³ In the thirteenth chapter of St. Matthew there is a series of parables, seven in number,—the sower, the cockle, the mustard-seed, the leaven put into the meal, the treasure, the pearl, the net. Each of these prefigures the Church, and all unite in pointing out its marks and characteristics.

Finally, we find in Sacred Writ many names applied to the Church that help us to get a true notion of its nature. It is called a "vineyard,"²⁴ a "grain of mustard-seed,"²⁵ a "garden,"²⁶ a "field,"²⁷ a "sheepfold,"²⁸ "the sheep,"²⁹ a

“flock,”³⁰ a “net,”³¹ a banquet,³² the threshing-floor;³³ “the bride, the wife of the Lamb;”³⁴ “the body of Christ;”³⁵ the seed of Abraham;³⁶ “the kingdom of heaven;”³⁷ “the City of Truth, . . . the sanctified mountain;”³⁸ “a mountain in which God is well pleased to dwell;”³⁹ “the mountain of the house of the Lord;”⁴⁰ “a city seated on a mountain” which “cannot be hid;”⁴¹ the holy city of Jerusalem;⁴² “the city of our God;”⁴³ “a great house;”⁴⁴ “the house of God.”⁴⁵

Now, what is the Church? The Church has been called by many writers the “short way to the truth.” St. Peter calls the Church by a similar title when he says, “the way of truth shall be evil spoken of,”⁴⁶ and St. John insinuates the same thing in these words, “That which we have seen and have heard, we declare unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us, and our fellowship may be with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. . . . If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.”⁴⁷ The human mind is weak. He who would acquire much truth by his

own research must labor hard and long. But he who knows the Church, "the pillar and ground of the truth,"⁴⁸ and accepts her teachings, is at once in possession, either actually or virtually, of all truth. "He that knoweth God, heareth us."⁴⁹

The Church Militant is defined in an exact manner: "a society of living men united in the profession of one and the same Christian faith, and by the communion of the same sacraments, under the rule of legitimate pastors." The Church is not, as the Donatists affirmed, "a congregation of the just," or "a congregation of faithful whose faith shall never fail," where the words "just" and "faithful" are used in an exclusive sense. Nor is it, as the Pelagians taught, "a congregation of those who have no sin," nor as Huss and Wyckliffe defined it, "a congregation of the predestined." All these have ignored the fact that Christ likened His Church to a flock, in which are sheep and goats; to a net, in which are good and bad fishes; to a field, in which wheat and cockle grow until the harvest. Their definitions are all incompatible with a visible Church, and inappli-

cable to any society of men on earth. Their purpose was, however, to cloud the visibility of the Church, in order the more easily to subvert its authority, and in the end to destroy it entirely.

The Church is a *society*, not an agglomeration, or aggregation, or a mob. A society is the union of many for a common end, an assemblage of men tending, by united forces, to a common term. Three things are included in the notion: many individuals or men, a common end or object, united tendencies or a bond making it a unit. The Church is not a mere system of philosophy, nor a body of definite doctrine, nor a certain code of laws, although it possesses these in perfection. Nor is it simply a set of truths nor solely a crowd of individuals. But it is a living, energizing organism; it is a divine institution, the instrument for instructing man in the truths revealed by God and dispensing to him the treasures of heaven. It is a supernatural society, of which Christ is the founder, the head, the centre, the beginning and the end.

The Church is a *divine* society, not alone because its Founder was a divine Person, nor yet

because it teaches the supernatural destiny of man, but it is divine in this sense also, that its informing principle, the life and life-giver of its organization, is the Divine Spirit of God indwelling in it. Christ has said: "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."⁵⁰ "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever. The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, . . . but you shall know him; because he shall abide with you, and shall be in you."⁵¹

For the institution of the Church, as for the origin of everything else, there must necessarily have been a sufficient cause. It behooves us, therefore, to investigate the reasons that made its existence a necessity. When God created man, He made him to His own image and likeness. "He gave them instructions, and the law of life for an inheritance,"⁵² a moral nature that resembled His own moral being. While that law was unclouded in man's conscience, no other preaching or teaching was necessary. After the fall, He taught the race through the patriarchs;

but when "all flesh had corrupted its way,"⁵³ and sin and time had darkened the light of understanding and stifled the voice of conscience, God, pitying poor mankind, deigned to give him the written law, renewing again the precepts that He had implanted in man's breast from the beginning. So God taught men under the law of Moses. This law was, as St. Paul says, "our pedagogue in Christ."⁵⁴ It prepared the way for the completer revelation that He was to bring in. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law: that he might redeem them who were under the law; that we might receive the adoption of sons."⁵⁵ Hence, again, St. Paul tells us so beautifully, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke, in times past, to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days hath spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world."⁵⁶

Christ's mission in the world was to teach, to redeem, to forgive. St. Luke tells us Christ "began to do and to teach."⁵⁷ "He taught in

their synagogues.”⁵⁸ ‘He was teaching daily in the temple.’⁵⁹ “He went through the villages round about teaching.”⁶⁰ ‘He opened his mouth and taught the multitude.’⁶¹ “Never did man speak like this man.”⁶² “He was teaching them as one having power.”⁶³ And of Himself our Lord said that He came to “preach the kingdom of God.”⁶⁴ He “was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world.”⁶⁵

But He came, also, to redeem mankind and to take away sin. “God sent his Son . . . that he might redeem them who were under the law.”⁶⁶ “He appeared to take away our sins.”⁶⁷ When John the Baptist, who was preaching by the Jordan, saw the Saviour approaching him, moved by the Spirit he pointed Him out to the multitude, saying: “Behold the lamb of God, behold him who taketh away the sin of the world.”⁶⁸ And Isaias says, “He was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed.”⁶⁹

Christ not only redeemed the race, paying

the penalty of sin by His death upon the cross, but while here upon earth He actually remitted the sins of individuals. To the paralytic He said: "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." ⁷⁰ And when the Scribes and Pharisees murmured, saying, "Who can forgive sins, but God only?" He wrought a miracle to prove "that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins." ⁷¹ He declared to Mary ⁷² that her sins, also, had been forgiven.

Now the question which confronts us is this, Did Christ really establish a means to perpetuate His work of teaching and forgiving, and to apply the fruits of His redemption to man? Did He establish a Church or not? This is the paramount point. There is question here of a fact. Either He did or did not found a Church, and upon that fact rests the whole fabric of Christianity. Experience proves that the founders of all human associations, the most insignificant as well as the greatest, have always endeavored to give a lasting character to their work by establishing some mode of succession in their organizations. The false prophet of Islam did not limit the

sphere of his doctrines to the brief span of his own life. He coveted the conquest of nations, and he organized a society to secure that end. The heads of modern sects have each sought to establish some semblance of a society through which to propagate their favorite tenets. The founders of our Republic were not satisfied with merely achieving independence and proclaiming the great doctrine of man's equal political rights, but they cemented the several commonwealths into a political society and formulated a constitution under which the nation might be perpetual. Can we believe that Christ did less? Must we suppose that the Son of God, the eternal Wisdom, who came down to earth to preach the truths necessary for the salvation of all men throughout all time, to heal our wounds and forgive our sins, was, after a few years, to be taken away, leaving nothing behind to perpetuate His teaching or to continue His work of merciful forgiveness? Must we believe that His life ended in a tragedy on Calvary, only to be followed by a farce in the world? If Christ established no society for this purpose, how was His message to mankind to be preserved? As

yet no word of the New Law was committed to writing. The New Testament is the product of the Church. Those who boast of the Bible have no real reason to praise Christ, if He left no organization here to perpetuate His doctrine, to publish His words and perform His works.

Christ was not unwise. He was God. And "He left not himself without testimony."⁷³ Through His chosen representatives His doctrines and revelations have been handed down,—“according as they have delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word.”⁷⁴ He called to Himself the Apostles, at first one by one,—Andrew and Peter, then Levi and John and James, and the rest. And later in a public manner He designated the twelve.⁷⁵ St. Luke, in the ninth chapter,⁷⁶ says, “Then calling together the twelve apostles, he gave them power and authority. . . . And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God.” In Matthew⁷⁷ He promised to build His Church upon Peter as the chief of the Apostles, and He placed in him the primacy. At another time⁷⁸ He gave to the Apostles the power of forgiving sins; and

at His last supper He ordained the twelve Priests,⁷⁹ giving them power to consecrate the bread and wine into His sacred Body and Blood. Again, speaking to the Apostles, He says: "You have not chosen me: but I have chosen you; and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit; and your fruit should remain."⁸⁰ What a proof of apostolic power, yet what a rebuke to indolence in the work of the ministry! We begin to suspect that Christ wished to perpetuate His work in the world, the work of teaching, and of forgiving the sins of men.

But let us not stop here. Note the words of our Lord. It is the night of the sacred Passion. Christ is passing from the supper-hall to the garden of Gethsemani. He is praying to the Father for the whole world, and especially for His Apostles, that they "may be sanctified in truth," that they "may be one," etc., and He says: "As thou hast sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."⁸¹

And St. John narrates how, after the resurrection, our Lord came, the doors being closed, and stood in the midst of His Apostles and said:

“Peace be to you. And when he had said this, he shewed them his hands, and his side. The disciples, therefore, were glad when they saw the Lord. He said, therefore, to them again: Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When he had said this, he breathed on them; and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.” ⁸²

But the grand commission of the Apostles, the *Magna Charta* of the Church of Christ, is found in the Gospel according to St. Matthew. “Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations: . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.” ⁸³

Add to this the words from Luke: “He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me. And he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.” ⁸⁴ Also from Mark, where the commission to baptize and teach is

given: "And he said to them: Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be condemned." ⁸⁵ St. Paul clearly affirms the fact of the call and commission of a clerical body, while assigning reasons for the same: "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." ⁸⁶

The conviction grows upon us that Christ really did establish a society to carry on His work, and that the words of the commission make plain what that work was to be; and we are enabled to appreciate the force of St. Paul's remark, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation: which having begun to be declared by the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." ⁸⁷

The authority of the Church follows from the commission which constitutes it a society and gives it existence. Christ Himself spoke as one having authority. "The Son of Man hath power

on earth.”⁸⁸ “All power is given to me in heaven and in earth,”⁸⁹ He said. Now the same authority possessed by Himself He vested in His Apostles. “He that heareth you, heareth me.”⁹⁰ “As the Father hath sent me, I also send you.”⁹¹ “You have not chosen me: but I have chosen you.”⁹² “Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven.”⁹³

The authority of the Church includes at once both the right and the power which it possesses in the three departments of government—the legislative, executive and judicial. The simple fact that the Church is a society at all, proves that it has a right to make suitable laws for its own management and to secure their enforcement. The ecclesiastical body in the Old Law exercised legislative, judicial and executive powers. No society is so impotent as not to make some showing of authority. We are justified, therefore, in expecting that the Church would exercise the authority committed to it. We should reasonably expect to see it regulating its own discipline, establishing festivals, appointing feasts and fasts, prescribing laws concerning the religious rela-

tions of its members, and demanding obedience to those laws under the displeasure of heaven.

Now history verifies this expectation. The Church from the beginning spoke with no uncertain sound. Her mode of teaching was not, "*It is, and, It is not.*"⁹⁴ At no time has she failed to assert her authority. Less than twenty years after the ascension of Christ a council was called in Jerusalem, which has been the model for all subsequent councils of the Church. We have a record of the proceedings of that council preserved in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Certain laws were enacted, certain declarations made, certain instructions sent forth. There was no half-hearted assumption of authority here. Only the conscious possession of it could have given utterance to these words: "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us."⁹⁵ Witness, also, the pronouncement of St. Paul on the reception of the Holy Eucharist: "Let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the

Lord.”⁹⁶ And again on the sacrament of marriage: “But to them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her husband. And if she depart, that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife.”⁹⁷ He tells us, moreover, that it is “with the power of our Lord Jesus”⁹⁸ that he excommunicates the guilty Corinthian; and again, that it is “in the person of Christ”⁹⁹ he pardons him. So St. John epitomizes the teaching authority of the Church when he says, “He that knoweth God, heareth us.”¹⁰⁰ And St. Paul, when he says to the people, “Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they watch, as being to render an account of your souls.”¹⁰¹

Just one thought more. What sort of a society is this true Church of Christ? Can it be seen and known? Is it visible? Or is it an indeterminate, intangible, shadowy, subtile something, that escapes discovery and does not admit of identification? Is it like the lark which Europeans speak of, that soars amid the clouds till lost from human vision? Is it like the fabled serpent of the

sea, a mystery or a misnomer? Is the Church a cuttle-fish institution, that addles the elements and eludes one's grasp? Is it the juggler's bean that is forever under the wrong thimble?

Our purpose here is to prove that the Church which Christ established is a visible, tangible institution, capable of being known and pointed out. Christ and His Apostles were visible. The Apostles received their commission to teach by audible sounds and visible signs,—“He breathed on them; and he said to them.”¹⁰² They discharged this office by words and acts. The Holy Ghost on the birthday of the Church came down in the form of tongues of fire upon the disciples. The Scriptures tell us that on that day three thousand persons were added to the Church,—“Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphilia, Egypt, and the parts of Lybia, about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome. Jews also, and proselytes, Cretes, and Arabians.”¹⁰³ How could it be said that these were added to the Church unless members could be known and numbered and visibly introduced?

The visibility of the Church follows of necessity if there exists an obligation to enter the Church. God could not command me to hear a Church that could not be known, nor to enter a Church that could not be found. But the Church is visible because its membership is made up of men who are visible; its authority is exercised by men who are known, upon subjects who are able to be located. Man belongs to human society. He is a social being. He must give public worship to God as a member and part of human society. All this implies that the organization or society in which he worships God must be, like human society, a visible institution.

Again, the visibility of the Church is proved from the mode of accession to and association with it. The idea of membership is full of visibility. We receive the knowledge of truth by definite instruction. The doctrines and laws presented are tangible things. "Faith . . . cometh by hearing."¹⁰⁴ "And how shall they hear without a preacher?"¹⁰⁵ Baptism, by which we are born into the bosom of the Church, is a visible sign. The profession of faith, prescribed as a condition

for Baptism, falls under the organs of sense. All the rites and ceremonies employed by the Church appeal to the soul only through the senses of the body. From the cradle to the grave our existence in the Church is nourished by the Sacraments, all of which are visible signs.

There is not one phrase in the whole Scripture, not one word applied to the Church, which does not aptly suit it as a visible institution. All the figures and parables which so admirably portray its character refer to something visible. The Church is called "a flock," "a field," "a city seated upon a mountain" which "cannot be hid," a light "upon a candle stick" (not "under a bushel"), "a grain of mustard-seed" that "becometh a tree" and furnishes shelter to the birds of the air, "a stone . . . cut out of a mountain" that will fill the whole earth. It is "the mountain of the house of the Lord . . . prepared on the top of mountains." It is likened to a "house," a "body," the "body of Christ."

There is no stronger way to express the visibility of the Church than to call it a body. St. Paul gives us to understand that Christ instituted the

Church as a kind of reincarnation of Himself; Christ is the very life and soul of it, men are the members, the body of it. He says: "Now you are the body of Christ, and members of member," ¹⁰⁶ and: "He hath subjected all things under his feet: and hath made him head over all the church, which is his body, and the fulness of him, who is filled all in all." ¹⁰⁷

Although the Church is a visible society, we must not forget that it has within it something that is invisible. It is a spiritual and supernatural society as well. Hence the extreme error of saying that the Church is all body or all soul, or that it is all visible or all invisible.

The last argument I shall adduce for the visibility of the Church is the strongest of all. There is nothing that proves a fact so well as the fact itself. Both the existence and the visibility of the Church are demonstrated by pointing out the very Church itself, visibly present in the world. History tells of that Church, of its venerable antiquity, its splendid equipment, its precise and powerful action. That Church challenges our admiration and invites our study. It is of that

Church the Canticle speaks when it says, "Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array?" ¹⁰⁸ And Isaias, when he says, "The mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it." ¹⁰⁹ The study of that Church is a profitable thing. It is little less than a crime against our intellectual nature to remain ignorant of her splendid story. For a Catholic, especially, to ignore her prerogatives, and not to glory in her greatness, is, to my mind, a thing to be deeply deplored.

One word to those who are not of the Catholic faith. No trivial business is before us. The Church of Christ is an institution great and grand enough to claim your most thoughtful study. Let me tell you that there are many who do not know the old Church. The bias of early training, inherited prejudices that are hard to lay aside, and the scandals caused by unworthy members of the Church, have conspired to give wrong notions of her. But I put the question to you,

Are not your eternal interests and present obligations respecting the true Church just the same as are mine? Are we not all children of one Father? "Hath not one God created us?" ¹¹⁰ Have we different destinies, or are we provided with unlike means for reaching our end? If Christ founded a Church, there is an obligation for you to find it. "He that believeth not, shall be condemned." ¹¹¹ "He that is not with me, is against me." ¹¹² "What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?" ¹¹³ Christ knew, however, that 'not all would obey the Gospel,' ¹¹⁴ and His heart went out towards the obstinate and the erring,— "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold," He said, "them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." ¹¹⁵ The Church of Christ is visible. "Seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you." ¹¹⁶ If you are assailed by doubts in this matter, or wrapped in insensible slumber, as a friend of your souls I bid you arise; take courage, and wrestle with the angel of doubt. When you have fully awakened to the light of truth, you will ex-

claim with Jacob of old, "Indeed the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. . . . This is no other but the house of God, and the gate of heaven." ¹¹⁷

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II.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

“I believe in . . . One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.” Nicene Creed.

“Other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.” John 10:16.

“My perfect one is but one.” Cant. 6:8.

“We being many, are . . . one body.” 1 Cor. 10:17.

“One body, and one Spirit: as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all.” Ephes. 4:4-6.

* * * * *

In my last discourse I attempted to show that Christ really established on earth a visible Church, to which all ought to belong. To-night I shall proceed to prove the properties and attributes of that Church; I shall also begin to point out the marks that distinguish it, so that an honest seeker may be able to find it, and be sure of the fact when he has found it. My first duty is to demonstrate the unity of the Church. The Church is one. Oneness is a mark of the true Church, and besides that one Church there is no other true Church.

Right in the beginning it is pleasant to call attention to those things that make for unity at the present time. I believe there is a wide-spread, sincere conviction among all classes of people that all of God's children should seek the Church established by Christ. It is time to return to the one fold. I say that I feel this sentiment is wide-spread. Years ago the Very Rev. Father Hecker, one of the founders of the missionary society of St. Paul, a convert to the Church and a man of

wonderful foresight, detected this drift towards unity, and that fact particularly gave color and character to all his enterprises. These are his words: "The tendency of religious minds is now to unity, as it was to disunion centuries ago, and this is a great blessing of Providence. Taking protestants all around, they prefer to look for terms of agreement with us, rather than to attack our peculiar doctrines or to insist upon their own." He goes on to say that the time has come when consecrated self-sufficiency is being rejected; the exaggerated personal independence of the past is no longer being insisted upon, and he puts this question: "If it is a good thing to have the testimony of one's own conscience, is it not a better thing to have the concurrence of many consciences? One is not called upon to weaken the force of his internal conviction because he finds himself agreeing with his neighbor." Father Hecker adds: "The very seeking for points of agreement tends to subdue the spirit of confusion, and to eliminate points of disagreement, and hence to strengthen the truth."

The Rev. George F. Candlin, for many years a

protestant missionary to China, is another who bears testimony to this sentiment. In a remarkable paper on religious unity in its relation to the work of Christian missions, read at the Parliament of Religions, he says: "It was to the united Church that the grace of Pentecost was given; it was to equip her for the conquest of the world that she was clothed with its inspiration. It is idle," he adds, "to bemoan the past, but it is the part of wisdom to learn its lessons, and surely one of the lessons God is loudly teaching us to-day is that to have larger measure of missionary success we must have increased Christian unity. In the very nature of things these two must go together. In the family, in business, in the management of the state, we do not hesitate to recognize the principle that domestic harmony and outward prosperity are linked inseparably to each other. Can we imagine then that in religion alone, which ought to be its grandest expression, the law is relaxed? Is a religion universal in its empire, but disordered and disparate in its fellowship, so much as conceivable? The world conquered by a divided Church? Never!" These are certainly earnest words.

I quote again from Dr. Parker, of South Congregational Church, Hartford, as reported in the public press. His topic was, The Roman Catholic Church. He speaks of its historical continuity, its admirable organization, its compact unity, its faith and its worship, and he adds: "Our debt of gratitude to the Catholic Church is immense. The Roman Catholic Church is a mighty bulwark against the wild, raging and destructive forces in social life. . . . On the question of supernatural religion the Roman Church is powerful and solid. The Roman Church believes in God the Father, in Christ the Lord, in the Holy Ghost, in humanity's sin, and in divine redemption, and it holds out the blessed hope of eternal life and a warning of retribution against sin. It perpetually teaches these things in the midst of an unbelieving and materialistic world. The Apostolic and Nicene creeds, which Protestants accept, are the Roman Catholic Church's. The *Te Deum* is her incomparable hymn." Dr. Parker says that he is glad that the spirit of confidence is growing, and that all are drawing nearer together.

Next, I submit the testimony of Dr. Philip Schaff, the Nestor of protestantism in America.

He prepared two papers for the Parliament of Religions. One of them, entitled "The Reunion of Christendom," which was read on the fifteenth day, opens with these words: "The reunion of Christendom presupposes an original union, which has been marred and obstructed but never entirely destroyed." In a very naive way Dr. Schaff calls attention to our national knack of invention, even in religion. "In the United States," he says, "all the creeds and sects of Europe meet on a basis of liberty and equality before the law, and are multiplied by native ingenuity and enterprise." "The number," he adds, "is much too large, and a reproach to the Christian name." Again, "Where the sin of schism has abounded, the grace of future reunion will much more abound." "The history of the Bible," he says, "is, to a large extent, a history of its abuse as well as of its use, of imposition as well as exposition. No book has been more perverted. The mechanical inspiration theory of the seventeenth century, which reduced the Biblical authors to mere clerks, is given up by scholars. The wild, allegorical exegesis, which turns the Bible into a nose of wax and makes it

to teach anything that is pious or orthodox, has been superseded by an exegesis which takes out the real meaning of the writer, instead of putting in the fancies of the reader." He continues: "Many proof texts of Protestants against Popery . . . can no longer be used for partisan purposes. The Latin Church," he says, "is a glorious Church. She was the alma mater of the barbarians of Europe. She stimulated and patronized the Renaissance, the printing press, and the discovery of the new world. She still stands like an immovable rock, bearing witness to the fundamental truths and facts of our holy religion, and to the catholicity, unity, unbroken continuity and independence of the Church. And she is as zealous as ever in missionary enterprises and self-denying works of Christian charity."

"If there is a thing," says Matthew Arnold, "specially alien to religion, it is division. If there is a thing specially native to religion, it is peace and union. Hence original attraction towards unity in Rome, and hence the great charm and power for man's mind of that unity when once attained."

I have quoted at length from these sources to prove the wide-spread feeling among scholars that the time has come when the multiplicity of creeds is considered absurd. All seem to agree that the Church *ought* to be one, even if it is not. They feel that we ought to unite, although they do not know just how to unite, and so the schisms survive. One thing is sure, we can never arrive at the one true Church by shaving the corners off discordant creeds and then pasting the residue together. It is the duty of every man to find the true Church and to eschew the false. Christ's Church is really visible, and easily found. "A path and a way shall be there, and it shall be called the holy way: . . . and this shall be unto you a straight way, so that fools shall not err therein." ¹

But did Christ establish one true Church? Is the true Church but one? That is the question I must answer. I hold that unity is an attribute inherent in and essential to the true Church. Oneness is its first mark.

There are some who boast of the liberty to believe in anything they wish, they glory in the

physical power of assenting to untruth. Thoughtful minds are sad when they behold this perversity. Man's intellect was created for truth. It is enriched by believing in truth. It is weakened and clouded by assent to error. As no one has a moral right to do a moral wrong, so no man has the moral right to believe untruth. If there were as many gods as there are religions, as many heavens as there are persons, those people who rejoice in the multiplicity of churches might not be considered insane. But as there is only one God, and one heaven, it behooves all to seek after that God, and to reach that heaven, by the way Christ has pointed out.

The early reformers taught the uselessness of works. Faith was the only thing necessary for salvation. It made no difference what you did, provided you believed. Things have changed since then. The pendulum has swung to the other side. The plausible error of our time is that it matters not what a man believes, if only he does what is right. But this proposition is self-contradictory, untrue and absurd. Those who lay it down wish that you believe *it*, at least. Hence there is some-

thing that they hold as necessary for belief. Besides, the statement is untrue for other reasons. We cannot do rightly unless we believe rightly. When we undertake to do anything morally right or wrong, we must beforehand know some principle in which we do believe, and with which we can compare our conduct in order to decide whether the act is right or wrong. It is utterly impossible to do right without believing in the right, and hence the necessity of true belief for right conduct. The man who says he believes nothing at all tells what is untrue. The mind of man was made for believing, as the eye was made for seeing. Must a man doubt his eyes because, at some time in his life, he was mistaken in an object of vision? The things worth having are founded on faith. The need of having some sort of belief leads us to consider the necessity of knowing the Church which is the organ and authority of supernatural belief, and the guardian of divine faith.

That the Church is a society, has already been shown. Unity is the first requisite of the existence of a society. Everything in nature is in some

respect a unit — a *quid unum*, as philosophers say. The individual, the family, the state, each art — music, architecture, painting, sculpture, etc. — possesses unity as a prime element. Unity is a mark of perfection. The greater the mind, the greater the unity in the thought. God knows all things by a single act. The more perfect the society, therefore, the more perfect its unity.

The unity of the Church must be of the kind which should characterize a society of true believers and true worshipers. All its members should believe in the same truths; they should partake of the same Sacraments, and be governed under the same head. This is the idea of the Church which St. Cyprian gives: “There is one God and one Christ, and His Church is one, and the faith is one, and one the people joined together in the solid unity of the body in the bond of concord. This unity cannot be broken nor the one body be divided by the separation of its constituent parts.”²

The Church is one in doctrine or faith, one in ritual or baptism, one in regimen or hierarchy. Moreover, the Church is one in time and in space.

It is not enough that the Church should be *like* the Church Christ founded: it must be the *same* that Christ founded. Nor is it enough that the Church *was* the Church that Christ founded, but it must *continue to be* the Church Christ founded. The unity which we vindicate for the Church, then, is not a unity founded on similarity, but on identity.

The oneness of the Church includes union and unity. Union excludes division, unity excludes plurality, whether simultaneous or successive. Hence we can consider the oneness of the Church in three respects: (*a*) *ratio sui* — in its own very nature; (*b*) *ratio spatii* — with regard to extent of space; (*c*) *ratio tempus* — with regard to time. The Church of Christ must be one in itself, it must be the same all over the world, and it must be the same down through all time. These last two propositions come more appropriately under the universality and indefectibility of the Church, and will be taken up elsewhere.

The object of the Church, like the office of teaching, was not transitory and personal, but public and permanent, and therefore, for the

present, we are justified in assuming that the Church continues to be whatever it can be proved to have been in its own nature at its inception.

When we say that the Church must be one in itself, we mean that it must have one faith, one government and one cult. By one faith, we signify the unity of the mind of the Church; by one government, we signify the unity of the body of the Church, and by one cult we mean the unity of observance in the Church. The true Church is noameleon. Truth in its very nature is one and unvarying, and the Church is "the pillar and ground of the truth." Christ came to establish the reign of truth. His death had, for one of its ends, the bringing of all of God's children into one body. Christ has said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself."³ And St. John tells us of the High Priest's prophecy that "Jesus should die for the nation," and he adds, "And not only for the nation, but to gather together in one the children of God that were dispersed."⁴

So, too, the aim of the ministry which Christ established was to produce a united body of

believers: for, as St. Paul says, "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: until we all meet into the unity of faith." ⁵

All the scriptural names and references applied to the Church either assert or imply its oneness. The Church is called a kingdom. "And of his kingdom there shall be no end." ⁶ A kingdom is one. Our Lord says, "Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation." ⁷ The Church is called a house, "the house of God," ⁸ "the household of the faith," ⁹ a city, a net, a field, a vineyard. Our Lord likens it to a sheepfold, and says "there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." ¹⁰ No more beautiful title could be given to the true Church. Sheep go in flocks; they feed in one pasture; they follow one path; they are impatient if separated; they obey their own shepherd; they fly when a stranger appears. So the members of the true Church live in harmony, are nourished by the same doctrine and sacraments, obey the same pastors, and fly false

teachers. The Church is designated as the spouse of Christ,¹¹ and in Christ's law but one wife is permitted. Christ said He would build His *Church*, not His churches, and, as a matter of fact, no one really holds that Christ founded a multitude of churches. The anomaly is, that a multitude of men-made churches all pretend to have Christ for their founder. Christ excludes multiplicity of faiths from the idea of His Church. He makes no distinction of essential or non-essential doctrines to be believed or rejected. Every truth which He taught is fundamental and essential. He said to His Apostles: "Go . . . and preach the gospel"—not a part of it—"to every creature."¹² "Teaching them to observe *all* things whatsoever I have commanded you."¹³ "He that believeth not shall be condemned."¹⁴ He makes no exception. Who, then, will say which of His teachings can be rejected without condemnation?

St. Paul aptly compares the unity of the body of the Church to the unity that exists in the human body. "For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in

Christ, and every one members one of another.”¹⁵ And again: “For as the body is one, and hath many members: and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body: so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews, or Gentiles, whether bond, or free: . . . now there are many members indeed, yet one body.”¹⁶ We see, too, that St. Paul is very strong in his appeals for the preservation of Church unity: “Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of one mind one towards another, according to Jesus Christ: that with one mind, and with one mouth, you may glorify God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”¹⁷ And again he says: “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you.”¹⁸ “Watch ye,” he says, “stand fast in the faith.”¹⁹ “For we being many, are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread.”²⁰ How beautifully these words express the Communion of Saints, and the unity that ought to exist in the practice of the Church.

While St. Paul lay in prison in testimony of the Christian truth, he wrote to the Ephesians, beseeching them to be "careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. One body, and one Spirit: as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all." ²¹ In the most emphatic language, St. Paul condemns diversity of doctrine, and inveighs against innovators and disturbers: "There are some," he says, "that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema." ²² And, as if these words were not strong enough, he reiterates the statement: "As we said before, so now I say again: If any one preach to you a gospel besides that which you have received, let him be anathema." ²³ St. John teaches that unity of doctrine is a prerequisite for union of membership. "If any man come to you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not." ²⁴ And St. Paul, in like manner, writes: "Now I beseech you, brethren, to mark them who make dissensions

and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learnt, and to avoid them.”²⁵

The Church is evidently one whether we consider it in its origin or principle, or in its invisible head, or in the informing Spirit, or in its aim and end, or in the communion and connection of its members.

First, the Church is one in its principle. God, who calls every man into the Church, is one. “No man can come to me,” says our Lord, “except the Father . . . draw him.”²⁶ No one can come to the Father unless through Christ.²⁷ Christ is “the way”²⁸ and “the door.”²⁹ He is the author of our faith,³⁰ and our helper in every good work.—“Without me you can do nothing.”³¹ From Him all authority flows. Accordingly St. Paul says, “Our Lord Jesus Christ . . . by whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith in all nations for his name.”³² Moreover, the motive or formal object of faith, which is the authority of God, is evidently one. Therefore the principle of introduction into the Church is one.

Secondly, the invisible head of the Church is one,—“the great pastor of the sheep, our Lord

Jesus Christ.”³³ “He is the head of the body, the church.”³⁴ “He hath subjected all things under his feet: and hath made him head over all the church, which is his body.”³⁵ “Is Christ divided?”³⁶

Thirdly, the informing Spirit of the Church is one. Before Christ’s ascension, He promised to send down upon His Apostles the Holy Ghost, who would enable them to preach the gospel and to plant the Church, who would abide with them and be in them, who would ‘teach them all truth’ and ‘bring all things to their minds.’ The Paraclete, indwelling in the Church, is one. “Now there are diversities of graces, but the same Spirit. . . . For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews, or Gentiles, whether bond, or free.”³⁷

Fourthly, the end or aim of the Church is one. What is the end of the Church? Is it not heaven, the reward of the blessed? Our Lord has signified this reward in the parable³⁸ by the penny which every laborer received for his work. The penny was one, and there is but one heaven to aim at.

Fifthly, the Church is one in its communion,

member with member. The authority which all obey, the Sacraments which all receive, intercessory prayers and the good works of charity which all practice, are so many bands uniting all with their head and with each other. "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." ³⁹

Christ Himself wished His Church to possess unity.—"For God is not the God of dissension, but of peace." ⁴⁰ "Every kingdom divided against itself," said He, "shall be made desolate: and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." ⁴¹ He condemns the dissenter and the unbeliever: "He that is not with me, is against me." ⁴² "He that believeth not, shall be condemned." ⁴³ He foretells, however, the actual existence of false teachers, and He warns us against them. "Beware of false prophets." ⁴⁴ "For there will rise up false christs and false prophets, and they shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce (if it were possible) even the elect." ⁴⁵ And this prediction has been verified in all ages.—"Because many false prophets," says St. John, "are gone into the world." ⁴⁶ And St. Paul, writ-

ing to Timothy, says: "Now the Spirit manifestly saith, that in the last times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of error, and doctrines of devils." ⁴⁷

Christ commanded submission to the authority He had set up. "If he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." ⁴⁸ "He that despiseth you, despiseth me. And he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." ⁴⁹ In the same way St. Paul condemns false doctrine and the fickleness of those who are influenced by it. He lays it down as a practical rule that the people should be guided by their prelates. "Remember your prelates," he says, "who have spoken the word of God to you: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ yesterday, and to-day: and the same for ever. Be not led away with various and strange doctrines." ⁵⁰ And again he tells us not to be as little children, "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." ⁵¹ And he nullifies the claims of all innovators when he says, "Other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid." ⁵²

There are two things that violate the unity of the Church. These are, heresy and schism. Heresy is a pertinacious continuance in a doctrine that is erroneous. It rejects one or more of the articles of Christian belief. It assails the unity of faith. It strikes directly at the mind of the Church. Schism spurns the authority of the Church. It is a spontaneous withdrawal from its communion. It strikes directly at the unity of the body of the Church. Schism and heresy are both great sins. "He that is such an one, is subverted, and sinneth."⁵³ Both violate the communion of the Church. Both break the bond of unity and charity. When charity is wanting, nothing else is of any avail. St. Augustine says: "He has not charity who divides unity." "The life of the Spirit follows not the amputated member."⁵⁴ And St. Cyprian: "He cannot have God for his Father, who has not the Church for a mother." Our Lord calls those who teach not His doctrine "blind, and leaders of the blind," and He predicts their downfall.⁵⁵ St. Paul, writing to Timothy, speaks of those "desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding

neither the things they say, nor whereof they affirm." ⁵⁶ And St. Peter refers to them as "fountains without water, and clouds tossed with whirlwinds, to whom the mist of darkness is reserved." ⁵⁷ Elsewhere he calls them "lying teachers, who shall bring in sects of perdition." ⁵⁸

It is not only wrong to fall into heresy or schism, but it is wrong to remain in either. "Beware," says Jehovah in the Old Law, "lest thou offer thy holocausts in every place that thou shalt see." ⁵⁹ In the New Law, as well as in the Old, God reserves to Himself the right to prescribe the worship that is pleasing to Him. He reserves the right to dictate the doctrines that every man must believe. He reserves the right to establish the authority which every man must obey. The twenty-second chapter of the Book of Josue presents an interesting object lesson on this point. After the Jewish tribes had reached the promised land, two of them withdrew beyond the Jordan. Here they began to set up altars of their own. When this became known to the others, they instantly reproached the two tribes for their sin of schism, and threatened them with chastisements

if they did not keep a common altar with the rest. "Thus saith all the people of the Lord: What meaneth this transgression? Why have you forsaken the Lord, the God of Israel, building a sacrilegious altar, and revolting from the worship of him?" ⁶⁰

There is some consolation, mingled with much sadness, in seeing schism and heresy assail the Church. Schism lops off decaying boughs from the living tree. Heresy is like a ferment, that takes the froth and foam and leaves the pure wine of doctrine. Both schism and heresy clarify the atmosphere of truth and purify the body of the Church. Both bear testimony, historically, to the stand taken by the Church on questions of doctrine and on matters of authority in every age. "They went out from us; but they were not of us." ⁶¹ The true Church can no more suppress her authority, or minimize the truth of her teachings, than can the sun hold back its heat or refuse to give its light. Just as the healthy human body rejects waste and worthless matter, so the Church must condemn heresy and denounce schism. History testifies to the vigilance of the Church in her

office as the guardian of the treasures of divine truth, and to the unity which has characterized her adherents. From the beginning, as St. Luke tells us, "they were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles,"⁶² and "the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul."⁶³ Still, in the earliest times, there were also apostasies, heresies and schisms, for some, like Hymeneus and Alexander, "made shipwreck concerning the faith."⁶⁴ And as St. Paul dealt with these, so has the Church dealt with their imitators in every age. Witness the condemnation of the Arians, Manichæans, Macedonians, Pelagians, Nestorians, Eutychians, and all the rest, down to the present time.

I have said that unity is an attribute of the Church, and thus far I have endeavored to prove it so. But it is more than an attribute. It is a mark of the true Church. As an attribute, unity is a property inherent in the Church, and springing from its essence; but as a mark, unity is manifested externally, so that the Church may be known by it. The Church is not only essentially one, but also visibly one. It was this

external unity and visible charity existing among the early Christians that drew from their pagan neighbors the remark, "See how those Christians love one another!"

Our Lord Himself wished nothing more earnestly than that unity of mind and will, which result from truth in doctrine and obedience to government, should characterize His followers. "A new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another." ⁶⁵ He wished this unity to be the sign by which His own Messiahship should be recognized in the world. Place yourselves in thought on the bank of the Cedron, and listen to the Saviour praying to His heavenly Father, just before He enters the Garden of Gethsemani to begin His sacred Passion: "And not for them only (the Apostles) do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in me: that they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee: that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent

me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them: that they may be one, as we also are one. I in them, and thou in me: that they may be made perfect in one; and the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast also loved me.”⁶⁸ That prayer, which is as deep as eternity, as broad as immensity, as high as heaven, proclaims the truth of the proposition that I have undertaken to prove. Christ’s society is a united society, and where that perfect oneness is, there is the Church.

This fact, however, remains. There are large numbers who, while readily admitting in words the unity of the Church, still delude themselves by a false theory and never enter it. They dream that in some shadowy way they belong to the soul of the Church, or they calmly claim membership in the body because their sect is a part of the Church. A few words as to what Church membership means, and how it may be acquired or lost, will not be out of place.

One thing is certain: the true Church has no sect which is part of it. The unity of the Church is not a union of sects. Schism in unity, and

sects in a Church that is one, are terms that carry a contradiction. If one Church is true, all sects are false.

Membership in the true Church can originate only in two ways, viz: by actual baptism into at least the body of the Church, or by a virtual baptism into at most the soul of the Church. The body of the Church consists of all those persons who are united by external communion and government into one visible society. A valid, actual baptism, no matter by whom administered, is the only introduction to membership in that body, — “For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body,” ⁶⁷ — and unless an actual or a virtual act of apostasy takes place, membership in the body of the Church is retained. One ceases to be a member of the body of the Church by a denial of her doctrines or a withdrawal from her authority. “But we are not the children of withdrawing unto perdition, but of faith to the saving of the soul.” ⁶⁸

We have intimated that the Church has a soul as well as a body. Those belong to the soul of the Church who are united to God by charity. Every man who is in the state of sanctifying

grace is a member of the soul of the Church. Besides the actual baptism of water, which, when rightly received, admits one to both the body and the soul of the Church, there is a virtual baptism which admits one simply to the soul of the Church, Virtual baptism may be either of martyrdom or of desire.

The baptism of martyrdom, called also the baptism of blood, is the shedding of one's blood for the faith of Christ. "He that shall lose his life for me," says our Lord, "shall find it."⁶⁹ The heroic sacrifice of life for God's sake can spring only from love of God. "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends."⁷⁰

Baptism of desire is a sincere will, founded on perfect love, to do all that God has ordained for one's salvation. It implies complete conformity of one's will with the will of God. It includes perfect sorrow for past sins; the wish, at least implicitly, to receive actual baptism, and the determination to do all in one's power to please God.

He who loves God in the perfect manner which

the baptism of martyrdom and of desire manifests, is, in turn, loved by God, for no one can outdo God in love. Such a one being united by charity to God, cannot be at the same time His enemy, but is in the way of salvation and belongs to the soul of the Church. "He that is not against you, is for you." ⁷¹ Membership in the soul of the Church is destroyed by mortal sin. When sanctifying grace is gone, the bond of membership in the soul of the Church is broken.

From all this we see that it is a sheer delusion to think that one is a member of the body of the Church who rejects its authority, or denies its doctrines, or lives separated from it. It is likewise a folly to suppose that one belongs to the soul of the Church who continues to live in sin, or who never seeks to be engrafted on the "true vine."

The mercy of God has made it possible for every one to receive, as speedily as he wills it, the baptism of desire for admission into the soul of the Church. God will freely "give the good Spirit to them that ask him." ⁷² But the sincere man will not rest with mere desire: he will strive to do all things that God has ordained for his salva-

tion. He will make reparation for past transgressions, he will plan wisely for future progress, he will seek the actual baptism as soon as possible and comply with every obligation membership imposes. No difficulty in the pursuit of truth should daunt him, no amount of sacrifice should turn him back,—“until we all meet into the unity of faith” ⁷³ and the communion of the one true Church, which is “the body of Christ.” ⁷⁴

You know where that body is to be found. Unity is its first mark. “My perfect one is but one.” ⁷⁵

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 3: 15. ⁹ Gal. 6: 10. ¹⁰ John 10: 16. ¹¹ Cant.
 4: 12; 2 Cor. 11: 2; Ephes. 5: 24; Apoc. 21: 9.
¹² Mark 16: 15. ¹³ Mark 28: 20. ¹⁴ Mark 16: 16.
¹⁵ Rom. 12: 4, 5. ¹⁶ 1 Cor. 12: 12, 13, 20. ¹⁷ Rom.
 15: 5, 6. ¹⁸ 1 Cor. 1: 10. ¹⁹ 1 Cor. 16: 13. ²⁰ 1 Cor.
 10: 17. ²¹ Ephes. 4: 3-6. ²² Gal. 1: 7, 8. ²³ Gal.
 1: 9. ²⁴ 2 John 1: 10. ²⁵ Rom. 16: 17. ²⁶ John
 6: 44. ²⁷ John 14: 6. ²⁸ Ibid. ²⁹ John 10: 7.

- ³⁰ Heb. 12: 2. ³¹ John 15: 5. ³² Rom. 1: 4, 5.
³³ Heb. 13: 20. ³⁴ Col. 1: 18. ³⁵ Ephes. 1: 22, 23.
³⁶ 1 Cor. 1: 13. ³⁷ 1 Cor. 12: 4, 13. ³⁸ Matt. 20: 9.
³⁹ Rom. 12: 5. ⁴⁰ 1 Cor. 14: 33. ⁴¹ Matt. 12: 25.
⁴² Matt. 12: 30. ⁴³ Mark 16: 16. ⁴⁴ Matt. 7: 15.
⁴⁵ Mark 13: 22. ⁴⁶ 1 John 4: 1. ⁴⁷ 1 Tim. 4: 1.
⁴⁸ Matt. 18: 17. ⁴⁹ Luke 10: 16. ⁵⁰ Heb. 13: 7-9.
⁵¹ Ephes. 4: 14. ⁵² 1 Cor. 3: 11. ⁵³ Titus 3: 11.
⁵⁴ Aug. Ser. 247, n. 4. ⁵⁵ Matt. 15: 14. ⁵⁶ 1 Tim.
1: 7. ⁵⁷ 2 Peter 2: 17. ⁵⁸ 2 Peter 2: 1. ⁵⁹ Deut.
12: 13. ⁶⁰ Josue 22: 16. ⁶¹ 1 John 2: 19. ⁶² Acts
2: 42. ⁶³ Acts 4: 32. ⁶⁴ 1 Tim. 1: 19, 20. ⁶⁵ John
13: 34, 35. ⁶⁶ John 17: 20-23. ⁶⁷ 1 Cor. 12: 13.
⁶⁸ Heb. 10: 39. ⁶⁹ Matt. 10: 39. ⁷⁰ John 15: 13.
⁷¹ Luke 9: 50. ⁷² Luke 11: 13. ⁷³ Ephes. 4: 13.
⁷⁴ Ephes. 4: 12. ⁷⁵ Cant. 6: 8.

III.

THE HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH.

THE HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH.

"A milk white Hind, immortal and unchanged,
Fed on the lawns, and in the forest ranged,
Without unspotted, innocent within,
She feared no danger, for she knew no sin."
— Dryden, "*The Hind and the Panther*."

"Christ also loved the church, and delivered himself up for it: that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." Ephes. 5: 25-27.

"I believe in . . . the Holy Catholic Church." Apostles Creed.

"Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, . . . ?" Cant. 6: 9.

"Thou art all fair, . . . and there is not a spot in thee." Cant. 4: 7.

"I have chosen you; and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit; and your fruit should remain." John 15: 16.

* * * * *

You who have listened to the preceding discourse will easily agree with me that the Bible is full of the Church. So abundantly does it testify to the unity of the Church, that I could do little more than gather together the texts I found in favor of its oneness and deliver them to you without developing them.

On the sanctity of the Church the same Book is not silent, while right reason confirms what revelation asserts. Holiness is one of the essential attributes of the true Church, and the second mark by which it may be known.

The word "holy" has many applications. It is given to persons, places and things. Places, buildings, altars, vestments, vessels and the like are called holy because they are consecrated to Him who is holy. Doctrines, rites, laws and practices are holy when they tend to produce holiness in men, or because they are conformable to right reason, or because they have been authorized or sanctioned by God's will.

Personal holiness is moral rectitude before God.

It means conformity to God and union with Him by grace. There are different grades of personal holiness. That grade which implies simply the state of sanctifying grace may be called common. Above the common grade is that reached by those who follow the evangelical counsels, and do good works that are not strictly required. Still higher is the heroic degree of sanctity, which proves that God in a special manner is with those who practice it.

Whether we consider the Church in its entirety, as something consecrated to God; or whether we consider it as something tending in its purpose and practices to produce righteousness; or, finally, as having, in fact, produced, and therefore as actually containing, saintly members, the Church is holy.

The sanctity of the Church, as has been said, is in it both an attribute and a mark. As an attribute it may be viewed in several ways: first, in its Author or Founder; secondly, in its essence or constitution; thirdly, in its end or aim; fourthly, in the means it employs; fifthly, in the members which compose its body. Sanctity as a note or mark of the Church is found especially in

the body or members of the Church, and implies the practice of exalted virtue, even in the heroic form. The Church is also known to be holy by the sanctity of all the doctrines it teaches, and by the reasonableness of its practices.

Again, the sanctity of the Church may be considered in two ways, as active or as passive. Active sanctity of the Church is its constant solicitude, and efficient exertion and industry, in rendering its members holy by the doctrines and motives it inculcates, and by the regulations and observances it employs as a means. Sanctity viewed passively is the effect of active sanctity. It is the possession of virtue and grace by members of the Church.

Now the Church is holy in all these different ways, as presently I shall try to prove.

Taking the Church in general, in its essence, it is easily shown that the Church of God ought to be holy. Long ago Isaias foretold the holiness and glory of the Church: "For Sion's sake, I will not hold my peace, and for the sake of Jerusalem I will not rest, till her just one come forth as brightness, and her saviour be lighted as a lamp. And the Gentiles shall see thy just one,

and all kings thy glorious one: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. And thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. . . . Thou shalt be called: A city sought after, and not forsaken.”¹ That which was said by Ezechiel of the temple may be aptly applied to the Church, of which the temple was a type: “This is the law of the house upon the top of the mountain: All its border round about is most holy.”² Scripture in very many places speaks of the Church as “the kingdom of heaven.”³ It calls it “the house of God,”⁴ “a great house,”⁵ the “city of God,”⁶ “the holy city, the new Jerusalem;”⁷ the “City of Truth, and the Mountain of the Lord of hosts, the sanctified mountain;”⁸ “an holy temple in the Lord,”⁹ “an habitation of God in the Spirit,”¹⁰ “the way of truth,”¹¹ “a mountain in which God is well pleased to dwell.”¹² When God is said to dwell in a place, it is because, by His sanctifying grace, He operates there; and wherever God by sanctifying grace operates, there is holiness. Again, the Church is called “the body of Christ.”¹³ Christ’s

body is not dead. "Christ . . . dieth now no more, death shall no more have dominion over him."¹⁴ So the Church lives by the very life that Christ lives. The Church is spoken of as the "spouse" of Christ,¹⁵ and He loves it with the love due to a spouse,¹⁶ and in turn is loved by it; and where there is mutual love between God and a creature, there is holiness.

The parables of the Gospel that tell of the Church indicate its holiness, though they teach very clearly, also, that not all the members of the Church are holy. The Church is the "pearl"¹⁷ which should be sought at any sacrifice; it is the "treasure hidden in a field;"¹⁸ it is the "leaven"¹⁹ that transforms the wicked world; but it is also the "net"²⁰ that incloses both the good and bad fishes, the flock that consists of both sheep and goats,²¹ the house that contains 'vessels of honour' and 'vessels of dishonour.'²² The Church is the instrument for sanctifying its members. It endeavors to make them holy and to keep them so. Its work is a progressive work. Its effects are inchoate and incomplete. Its members are not all transformed, but are being transformed.

We can infer the holiness of the Church from the purpose of its being. Every society is founded for some purpose, as Cardinal Gibbons remarks in this connection.²³ One society is formed for the purpose of social intercourse among its members; another to advance their temporal interests; another for promoting literary pursuits; a fourth for furthering political ends. Now the Church is a society founded by Jesus Christ for the sanctification of its members. "For this is the will of God, your sanctification."²⁴ "God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto sanctification."²⁵ "For the grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men, instructing us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live soberly, and justly, and godly in this world, looking for the blessed hope and coming of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and might cleanse to himself a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works."²⁶ Again St. Paul expresses the purpose of the Church in these words: "That you may be blameless, and sincere children of God, without reproof,

in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation ; among whom you shine as lights in the world.” ²⁷ Hence St. Peter could call the Church “ a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people.” ²⁸

The Church is holy not only in its aim, but in its action. It invites all to a holy life. With St. Peter it says: “ According to him that hath called you, who is holy, be you also in all manner of conversation holy.” ²⁹ And again, “ Wherefore, brethren, labour the more, that by good works, you make sure your calling and election. For doing these things, you shall not sin.” ³⁰

I have said that the Church is holy in its Author. Christ founded the Church. He is “ head over all the church, which is his body.” ³¹ No one who believes in Christ’s divinity will deny His sanctity. His bitterest enemies could not prove one point against His character, though challenged to the test. “ Which of you,” said Christ, “ shall convince me of sin?” ³² Those sent to apprehend Him were captivated by the power of His discourse, and confessed their failure, because “ Never did man speak like this man.” ³³ And

the verdict of the multitude that witnessed His miracles was, that "He hath done all things well." ³⁴ So St. Peter affirms that Christ was one "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." ³⁵ And the Eternal Father gave testimony of Him at His baptism, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." ³⁶ Even the spirits of evil were forced to acknowledge His holiness: "I know who thou art, the Holy One of God." ³⁷

The primal cause of the holiness of the Church, as well as a claim for its sanctity as a society, is clearly set forth by St. Paul in these words to the Ephesians: "Christ also loved the church, and delivered himself up for it: that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." ³⁸ This text alone presents succinctly nearly all the points we desire to prove concerning the holiness of the Church.

I have already shown, by the appellations given to the Church, that the Church in itself ought to

be holy. We see, also, that it aims at holiness. And holiness is likewise vindicated in its Founder. Thus far in our argument, Christians of every denomination are in practical accord. All easily admit what we have advanced as proof.

But the aim or end of every work necessarily implies some method or means. We must now inquire into the means which the Church employs for the sanctification of its members, and see if these are holy, salutary, and adequate for the purpose.

Here I speak not of the Church as an abstraction or a mental conception. I mean an actual Church in a concrete form. I have one such Church in my mind, and there is but one. Now I maintain that the methods and means which that Church employs to sanctify its members are most holy. Some of our non-Catholic friends may not agree with this assertion. But let us proceed with the proof.

The first point is, that that Church, and that Church alone, teaches to mankind the whole message of Christ. The Church was commissioned to preach the whole Gospel. In sending out the

Apostles our Lord said: "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature," ³⁹ "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." ⁴⁰ There is no authority given here to minimize or mutilate the Gospel, no power given to extend or extenuate the message of Christ. There was to be no teaching of a fractional faith, no preaching of truncated truth. The whole lesson, painful or pleasant, was to be inculcated.

Now we must observe that those who claim as the sole rule and source of faith merely the written word can not teach the whole of God's message. Christ left this earth without having written anything except a few words, and those in the sand. Was the world to learn only from the written word? If so, nothing was to be believed. But let us remember the message sent into the world was the spoken word. Christ taught by word of mouth, and He gave to His disciples no command to write His doctrine. Their manner of teaching is apparent from the Scriptures themselves. Read in the Acts of the Apostles ⁴¹ about "the word of God" spoken. Read in St. Paul's

Epistle to the Romans ⁴² of "the word of faith" preached. Read in the Epistle to the Colossians ⁴³ about 'the gospel heard and preached;' and again, in 1st Thessalonians, of "the word of the hearing of God" ⁴⁴ received and believed. So St. Paul tells the Corinthians, "For I delivered unto you first of all, which I also received; ⁴⁵ and in writing to Timothy he says, "The things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also." ⁴⁶

Hence we see the Gospel of Christ was, in the beginning, an oral message to mankind. Since His ascension, however, some portion of it has been committed to writing. "But there are also many other things which Jesus did: which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written." ⁴⁷ The Church is the author of the New Testament. She knows its message and its meaning. She alone reveres the Bible rightly, but she never forgets that she is the teacher and guardian of all revealed truth, whether the word be spoken or written.

The second point I wish to make is this, The holiness of that Church is shown by the character of the persons whom it holds up as heroes and proposes as models. Every man has his exemplar. Every individual is influenced by his ideal. Prince and peasant, bad and good, are molded after some accepted model.

Now, the Church holds before the people as patterns and examples, first of all Christ Jesus, the God-man; second, Mary, His Immaculate Mother, and, third, Christ's dearest friends, the Saints, who, by their heroic virtues, have won "the crown of life."

The Church does not only praise Christ, but she commands her children to imitate Him. When she tells us of His humility, His charity, His meekness, His holiness, it is that His virtues may become the exemplars of ours. Christ is preached in the Catholic Church from one end of the year to the other — "Jesus Christ; and him crucified," "yesterday, and to-day: and the same for ever." Catholic sermons are not usually on the fashions of the seasons, the topics of the times, nor the politics of the place. Catchy sub-

jects intended to amuse a congregation, and elicit favorable comments on the performance, are not the themes of her teaching, but in the person of Christ she gives counsel and command.—
 “Be ye holy, because I, the Lord your God, am holy.” ⁴⁸ “Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect.” ⁴⁹ “Be ye therefore followers of God, as most dear children.” ⁵⁰

The single fact alone, that nearly all the sects of the last centuries have exhibited an unnatural hatred towards the Mother of Christ, is patent proof that they are not of God. Mary Immaculate, the Maiden Mother of whom the prophets wrote and poets have sung,—

“Mother, whose virgin bosom was uncross’d
 By the least shade of thought to sin allied,
 Woman above all women glorified;
 Brighter than Eastern skies at daybreak strewn
 With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
 Before her wane begins on heaven’s blue coast,
 Purer than foam on central ocean toss’d,
 Mary, our tainted nature’s solitary boast,” — ⁵¹

has been hated and despised by self-professing Christians, who seem to have no care to be in-

cluded in her prophecy, "Henceforth, all generations shall call me blessed." ⁵²

Let us never forget that the infant Church was tutored by Mary. In the person of St. John, it took her for its Mother. From her St. Luke learned the minutest details of our Saviour's conception and birth. Without Mary's testimony the chain of evidence in the story of man's redemption could not be supplied. "Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart." ⁵³

I will not enlarge on this thought as my feelings would prompt me to. I will not try to count the throng that have taken Mary for a model, and have become better by doing so. Every woman is made worthier, purer, holier, by the example of Mary. Many a man has been preserved "unspotted from this world" by devotion to the Mother of God. This I will say, however, whoever hates my mother may as well hate me; and he who hates the Mother of Jesus, can scarcely call Christ his friend. "Blessed art thou among women," said the angel Gabriel, and "Hail full of grace," ⁵⁴ but when we say the same thing we are reproached with sacrilege and Mariolatry.

Still, the Church of God must honor the Mother of God.

“And, if our faith had given us nothing more
Than this example of all womanhood,
So mild, so merciful, so strong, so good,
So patient, peaceful, loyal, loving, pure,
This were enough to prove it higher and truer
Than all the creeds the world had known before.” ⁵⁵

’Tis strange, and yet it is not strange, that poets and painters, and the few who really think, of whatever creed, have found their choicest themes and greatest heroes in the Catholic fold.

“Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime.” ⁵⁶

Every day in the year the Church, to give us an object lesson, celebrates the feast of some Saint. What examples of patience, purity and self-sacrifice, of meekness, charity, hope and faith, are set forth for our imitation by all the Saints. They invite us to follow their example. “Observe them who walk so as you have our model,” ⁵⁶ says St. Paul. The Saints were mortal men and women like ourselves, and in all things they were tried and tempted as we are. Their success should encourage us. But men that mock at the Saints

need no other sign to prove their lack of sanctity. Prof. Hall, of Clark University, wrote recently: "The Catholic Church is strong where we are weak, viz: in the veneration of the Saints."

The Catholic Church alone gives the fullest scope to all man's faculties in the worship of God. The Church makes use of every key and chord in the grand organ of creation to bring forth the sweetest melodies of praise to Him. Every art and science, every power and faculty, bears tribute to His throne. The Church teaches that God should be honored both by internal and external acts of adoration. She teaches us to worship Him "in spirit and in truth." Without that internal life and spirit, the outward act is but a show, a shell, a sham. Yet the Church does not stop with mere internal worship. God claims the homage of the whole of man, body as well as soul. As fire must have fuel on which to feed, so must the internal thought employ external things. As the bark of a tree is to its life and fruit, so are external things to things within.

The Church teaches her children to meditate and to pray. The breviary, which is virtually

the Bible, is the handbook of every Priest whose "will is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he shall meditate day and night."⁵⁷ Our standard books of devotion do not suffer when contrasted with those of other faiths,—the Bible with the Koran, the Following of Christ with Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, the *Lives of the Saints* with Fox's *Book of Martyrs*.

From a few well-founded principles, the Church deduces all her pious practices and devotions. The error many make is that each of these devotions is incumbent upon every one. But the Church is that wise householder spoken of in the Gospel, "who bringeth forth out of his treasure new things and old,"⁵⁸ so that the fancy, as well as the need, of every individual is satisfied.

The grand central act of Catholic public worship is the Mass, wherein the sacrifice of Calvary's Cross is set forth anew through every age, according to the prophet's words, "For, from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation: for my name is great among

the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts.”⁵⁹ The sweet sublimity of our public service has brought compunction to many a sinful soul, and peace to many a weary, broken heart. The great free-thinker, Bolingbroke, after assisting at a High Mass celebrated in Notre Dame in the time of Louis XIV., said, “If I were King of France, I would not allow any of my subjects to take part in so magnificent a sight, lest they should think the celebrant a greater personage than their Sovereign.” We Catholics, however, from familiarity, do not always realize the force and power of the Holy Sacrifice. We miss the beauty of the Mass. We come to Church, too often, as a matter of course, and we assist listlessly there, unmindful of the fact that the Mass is the only offering or object in the world that is really worthy of Almighty God. Tremendous thought, that God should daily dwell with us, to be our solace and our Sacrifice!

The sacramental system of the Church vindicates its holiness. The Sacraments are the sacred channels made by Christ to convey His grace and merits to our souls. The Church employs these

for our sanctification. In every crisis that may occur, from youth to age, she is ready to minister to our needs, cleansing us by "the laver of water" in Baptism; nourishing our souls with "the bread of life" in the Holy Eucharist; remitting our sins in the Sacrament of Penance; strengthening us in Confirmation; blessing the union of husband and wife in Matrimony; consecrating us to God through Holy Orders, and when our last hour is at hand she comforts us with "the oil of gladness" in Extreme Unction. Outside of the one true Church, where are the Sacraments? Only a vestige or a name remains. The seven holy signs instituted by Christ have dwindled down to two. And what are they? A Baptism carelessly performed, and a "Lord's Supper" eaten *à la mode*.

The moral teachings of the Catholic Church are the highest and holiest kind. Notice a few facts. After love of God, love of man comes next. The sanctity of the Church is shown in this, that she alone holds all human life as sacred. The sick, the aged, and the helpless babe find their champion in her. She civilizes the savage, con-

verts the cannibal, mitigates the horrors of war. Hospitals for the sick, and homes for the indigent, were her invention. The truce of God was her enactment. She inculcates charity in word and deed, and simple justice between man and man. She stands for the toiler's right to live, and to enjoy the full fruits of his labor. The Communion of Saints, which she alone teaches, is the only true brotherhood of men: it reaches from earth to heaven and from heaven to earth, and unites the living and the dead.

“For so the whole round earth is everywhere
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.”⁶⁰

The unit of society is the family. As the family is, so is the civil or political community that springs from it, for the stream cannot rise higher than its source. The stability of society, as well as the soundness of the family, rests on the marriage tie. That Church alone which teaches that matrimony is a Sacrament, and insists on the sanctity, unity and indissolubility of the marriage bond, deserves to be recognized as the promoter of purity, the preserver of the home and the saviour of society. Rather than permit the family to be

sullied by the practice of polygamy under any guise whatever, the Church has chosen to lose the adhesion of the great men of the world, and even to let kingdoms be severed from her side. Had she meekly submitted to Henry VIII. in his desire for a plurality of wives, there would have been neither an English schism nor an Anglican sect. The firm stand taken by the Church for monogamy bespeaks her holiness. Her courage in every crisis is in marked contrast with the weakness of Dr. Martin Luther and his confreres, who allowed the Landgrave of Hesse to contract a bigamous alliance. It is, however, to the credit of later protestants that they disown the acts of Luther and the English king. Some of them have even made much ado against the "relic of barbarism" that remains in our country, in Utah and elsewhere; but until divorce, with its consequent polygamy, is disallowed among the membership of the sects, their cry against the Mussulman and Mormon must sound rather insincere.

The Catholic doctrine of good works is another evidence of the holiness of the Church. That doctrine means that God is just, and that man will

be rewarded according to his deeds. It gives the strongest sanction and the most powerful motive for right conduct. The Church teaches the necessity of faith as a foundation for holiness of life, of hope as a guide, of charity as the finisher, and of good works as the result of all. That she is in accord with Christ and His Apostles on this matter is obvious. St. James declares, "Faith without works is dead," ⁶¹ and he says, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." ⁶² Our Lord promises a reward to the one who gives even "a cup of cold water, only in the name of a disciple." ⁶³ And he places the reason of heavenly happiness in the work done by the just. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger, and you took me in: naked, and you covered me: sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came to me." ⁶⁴ St. Paul tells us ⁶⁵ to mortify our members, and he says of himself ⁶⁶ that he chastised his body, lest he should become a cast-

away. And St. Peter exhorts us to "labour the more, that by good works, you may make sure your calling and election." ⁶⁷

Justification by faith alone, which was the fundamental tenet of the so-called Reformation, is a doctrine which is subversive of all morality and religion. The sounder sense of most protestants has generally discarded this teaching, as its evil influence on the morals of large numbers had become notorious. I quote from a work entitled, "The Religious Experience of a Physician." The author says, "The doctrine of justification by faith alone, without the 'deeds of the law,' as the old rhyme read, was not a doctrine which appealed to my reason, but it was a very consoling doctrine. Every young man who has been carefully reared by religious parents, and under the influence of a church, expects to be converted and get religion, and to join a church, some time before he dies. But if he enjoys good health, and the prospects of living for many years, especially if he is taught that by merely believing or having faith at any time in the atoning blood of Christ he can escape the consequences of his

evil deeds, there is great danger of procrastination."

Calvin taught in his Institutes ⁶⁸ the doctrine of arbitrary election and damnation,—that God predestined some to heaven and others to hell, without regard to their merits or demerits. Opposed to this blasphemy, the Church teaches that God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should return to penance." ⁶⁹ "He that spared not even his own Son: but delivered him up for us all" ⁷⁰ "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus: who gave himself a redemption for all." ⁷¹ God is always seeking the sinner. "Behold, I stand at the gate, and knock." ⁷² Over every wayward soul Christ weeps, as He did over the doomed city of Jerusalem. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not." ⁷³

Again, the kind of liberty that the Church

teaches is a sign of holiness. The Church has never acknowledged any man's right to do wrong. She has never preached man's liberty to injure himself, or to hurt his neighbor, or to dishonor his God. Liberty to reject the truth is not true liberty, because it is irrational and unintelligent. It is intellectual suicide, pure insanity. If we call the Church for this reason intolerant, the word is badly chosen. It would be better to say that the Church is uncompromising. But truth is uncompromising, and the Church is uncompromising because she is true,—even “the pillar and ground of the truth.” ⁷⁴ Christ has said: “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” ⁷⁵ Only in the possession of truth is real freedom found. Liberty is the fruit of law. Liberty without law is but license. While the Church antagonizes lawlessness and license, she is the only institution that has persistently vindicated man's freedom of will. She proclaims the doctrine that man is free, and she maintains his responsibility. Dr. Martin Luther, on the contrary, wrote a book on slave will, to prove that man is a mere instrument in the hand of some

other power. His illustration, which is more forcible and picturesque than elegant, gives the pith of his book. "Man," he says, "is an ass, which goes straight towards heaven if Christ rides and rules him; but if Satan is in the saddle, hell is his destination."

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We have yet to demonstrate the holiness of the body of the Church. The reasonableness of her devotions, and the soundness of her doctrines, prove, with irresistible logic, her sanctity in these respects, but the important question remains, What kind of people does she produce? Is the body of the Church holy? "By their fruits you shall know them." ⁷⁶

We have frequently affirmed that not all the members of the body of the Church are holy. The Church is the lavatory of the world. Its business is to purify the sinner, and to produce and preserve the saint. The Church is the only divinely appointed society for the reformation of men. But mark well, every moral action of man has its source in two distinct causes or principles of conduct: first, the extrinsic factors, the doctrines

of the Church, the Sacraments and sacramentals, the grace of God and all the outward agencies that help to sanctify the soul; second, man's free will, the intrinsic principle which accepts or rejects the opportunities and graces that come from without. God may bless, but if the free will rebels the soul remains in sin. God cannot and will not save a man against his free will. Hence a person may belong to the body of the Church, and still reject the means of salvation prescribed by the Church.

And now to the fact. I know too well the weakness of human nature and the wickedness of man's heart to be an optimist. Expectation is often disappointing, and the highest hopes frequently come to naught. Humbugs and hypocrites exist both in and out of the Church. Still I maintain that the influence of the Church tends to sanctify individual life, and, as a matter of fact, has made multitudes of persons holy, and holy to such a degree that sanctity among the members becomes at once both an attribute and a mark of the Church. God has cast the seed upon the soil: much of it may perish, still there will be a bountiful harvest.

I need not refute at length the stock objections which are offered against the holiness of the Church. It is sometimes said that her people are ignorant and corrupt, that popes and priests are frequently bad men. The sacrifices which we have made and are making in the interest of education, as well as the signal successes that have blessed our efforts, answer completely the charge of ignorance. One needs but glance at the pages of history to learn the influence the Church has wielded in every age on art and science, in the world of letters, and in all the great intellectual pursuits. But after all is said that may be said truthfully about the stupidity, ignorance and want of interest in intellectual things among our people, the fact still remains that, on the knowledge which is most important, Catholics are the best informed body in the world. They 'know whom they have believed.' They do not 'fight as one beating the air.' They are not at sea on the great questions of the soul — eternity, heaven, and the means of sanctification and salvation. The first chapter of our little Catechism teaches the child more and mightier truths of God and man, of Creator and creature, of destiny and duty, of hope and

happiness, than all the mere philosophers ever learned.

We may readily concede that many priests and a few popes have not been what they ought to have been. Especially those priests who have fallen from the faith and have formed sects for themselves have been notorious for their shortcomings. However, the heroism, self-sacrifice and purity of the Catholic priesthood in general need no eulogy here. Catholic priests have been the pioneers of science and civilization everywhere. From pole to pole in every land their zeal for souls is known. "The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep."⁷⁷ You cannot name a disease that daunts the courage of a Catholic priest. Where pestilence prevails he has never been called a coward. He prefers to be poor that heaven may be enriched with souls. He chooses a life of chastity, and thereby refutes the despairing doctrines of those who say that virtue is impossible.

If we except two or three out of two hundred sixty popes, what an illustrious line of pontiffs may we contemplate. In point of character the papacy towers heaven-high above any dynasty

the world has ever witnessed. In all fairness, there never was a body of men invested with power who reflected more the spirit of God and less of human weakness than the popes. Over eighty of them have been canonized as saints. More than thirty of them died martyrs for the faith. The virtue, wisdom and learning — in short, the lives of the popes, have shed glory on the world in every age.

As to the corruption of the laity, investigation will prove the contrary of the charge. The standard as to what constitutes a holy person in the Church is so high, compared with the standards that obtain elsewhere, that it may be said with truth, he is a very bad Catholic indeed who could not pass muster morally in any other creed. "If you choose to inspect this Church," says the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, "look for the good that belongs to her, and you will find it in great measure. If self-denial and voluntary poverty and obedience are evidences of sanctity, or, better, if they are graces acceptable with God, it must be at once admitted that the Roman Catholic Church exhibits a very goodly multitude of the lowly, the obedient and the sincere."

The long list of the canonized, and the lives of the Saints, whose heroism sprang from all that their faith supplies, testify abundantly to the sanctity of the body of the Church. On the roll of those heroes are men and women from every station and avocation of life, the old and the young, who have come through trials and tribulations that prove them great. The Saints practiced charity, they loved God, they served their fellow-man, they subdued self, they avoided sin, they despised vanity, they kept themselves "unspotted from this world." Many of them sacrificed their lives for truth and for virtue's sake. God, who "is wonderful in his saints," has sealed their sanctity by the evidence of miracles wrought by the Saints themselves or through their intercession. Such testimony is found nowhere else. The existence of miracles becomes, therefore, a mark of sanctity in the Church. Let no one imagine I insist that every extraordinary occurrence is a miracle. Personally I am little influenced in belief by reported prodigies. I would scarcely cross the street to witness a miracle. The Church, however, whose teaching conquers cor-

rupt human nature, subdues the savage passions of men, overcomes concupiscence of the flesh, the wickedness of the world and the wiles of the devil, and from the sinner makes the saint, needs no other miracle to prove its holiness.

It is noticeable among the sects that they possess hobby virtues. Mint and anise they tithe, while the weightier things of the law are neglected. They "strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel." The pride they take in their pet virtue tends really to sap the essence of all sanctity.

The holiness of the members of the Church has not always received the recognition of those without, though, thanks be to God! people are becoming more just in this matter. The courage of an Archbishop Hughes, the candor of a Cardinal Newman, and the self-sacrifice of a Father Damien, have not sufficed to shield those great names from the calumnies of little cowards. "The way of truth shall be evil spoken of."⁷⁸ "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution."⁷⁹ "The disciple is not above the master. . . . If they have called the

goodman of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household.”⁸⁰

Those who minimize the good achieved in the Church, and exaggerate the faults of her children, in reality pay an unwilling compliment to her sanctity, for they imply that those who are members of the Church ought to be better than those who are not members. A speck on the white alb of a priest is more noticeable than a spot on the dark coat of a parson. Since no other argument can be brought against the truth and sanctity of the Church but the one furnished by the bad lives of some of her children, every evil act of a member gives occasion of calumny against the whole body. “The name of God through you is blasphemed among the Gentiles.”⁸¹ Let this fact inspire us with stronger resolutions to “live soberly, and justly, and godly in this world.”⁸²

The sum of our sermon is contained in these words of St. Peter: “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, to refrain yourselves from carnal desires, which war against the soul; having your conversation good among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you

as evildoers, they may, by the good works which they shall behold in you, glorify God in the day of visitation.”⁸³

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¹³ Ephes. 4:12. ¹⁴ Rom. 6:9. ¹⁵ Cant. ¹⁶ Ephes.
 5:25. ¹⁷ Matt. 13:46. ¹⁸ Matt. 13:44. ¹⁹ Matt.
 13:33. ²⁰ Matt. 13:47. ²¹ Matt. 25:32. ²² 2
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²⁴ 1 Thess. 4:3. ²⁵ 1 Thess. 4:7. ²⁶ Titus 2:11-
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⁵² Luke 1:48. ⁵³ Luke 2:19. ⁵⁴ Luke 1:28.
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⁵⁸ Matt. 13:52. ⁵⁹ Mal. 1:11. ⁶⁰ Tennyson.
⁶¹ James 2:26. ⁶² James 1:22. ⁶³ Matt. 10:42.
⁶⁴ Matt. 25:34-36. ⁶⁵ Col. 3:5. ⁶⁶ 1 Cor. 9:27.
⁶⁷ 2 Pet. 1:10. ⁶⁸ Bk. 3, ch. 21, 22. ⁶⁹ 2 Pet. 3:
9. ⁷⁰ Rom. 8:32. ⁷¹ 1 Tim. 2:4-6. ⁷² Apoc. 3:
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8:32. ⁷⁶ Matt. 7:16. ⁷⁷ John 10:11. ⁷⁸ 2 Pet.
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⁸¹ Rom. 2:24. ⁸² Titus 2:12. ⁸³ 1 Pet. 2:11, 12.

IV.

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE
CHURCH.

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH.

“Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15.

“Teach ye all nations: . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.” Matt. 28: 19, 20.

“We have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith in all nations for his name.” Rom. 1:5.

“Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob.” Isai. 2:3.

“I believe in . . . the Holy Catholic Church.” Apostles’ Creed.

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The word "Catholic" comes from the Greek *katholikos*, which means "universal." When applied to any society, it conveys the idea that such society is intended for all men, through all time, and in every place. But when applied to a society which has for its purpose the teaching of truth, it includes also the thought that it teaches all truth. Therefore, a society to be Catholic in the sense in which we give the epithet to the Church, must be universal in time, in territory and in truth.

The Jewish dispensation, as is well known, was tribal, national, narrow, limited in every way. It was established for only one people, and intended to continue but for a certain time. The command which our Saviour gave His disciples on a particular occasion might have served as the general watchword of the Old Law,—“Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles.”¹ The Law led up to the Saviour and was to terminate in Him. It “was our pedagogue in Christ.”²

A chief reason for the circumscribed character

of the Jewish religion appears to have been the necessity of segregating the Hebrew nation, in order to make of it the nursery of the Redeemer. The Christ had been promised to the seed of Abraham, to the tribe of Juda, and to the house of David. "In thee [Abraham] shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." ³ "The sceptre shall not be taken away from Juda, nor a ruler from his thigh, till he come that is to be sent, and he shall be the expectation of nations." ⁴ "There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse." ⁵ "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, and I will raise up to David a just branch." ⁶ Hence it was that, among the Jews, tribes and families were kept distinct by the regulations of marriage and the laws governing inheritances and land tenure. There was to be no mistake as to the identity of the Messiah. For the promise made to Abraham was renewed to Isaac, ⁷ and to Jacob, ⁸ and the office and character of the Messiah were unfolded in psalm and prophecy more fully as the years increased, until St. Paul could affirm that 'the seed of Abraham is Christ,' ⁹ in whom all the promises culminated.

With the advent of the Messiah, the partial was to give way to the complete, the imperfect to the perfect. "I know that the Messiah cometh, (who is called Christ,)" said the woman at Jacob's well, "therefore, when he is come, he will tell us all things."¹⁰ A new covenant and a new Sacrifice were to succeed those known to the Jews. "I have given thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles."¹¹ "Behold, I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth."¹² "Behold, the days shall come, saith the Lord, and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Juda: not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers."¹³ "Sacrifice and oblation thou didst not desire. . . . Burnt-offering and sin-offering thou didst not require: then said I, Behold I come."¹⁴

The Messiah was fore-ordained to be a Catholic monarch. The Jewish dispensation was to be succeeded by a society universal in scope. The Old Testament in many ways foreshadows the kingdom of Christ, and foretells its Catholicity.

Indeed, it speaks as often and as clearly of the Church, and its characteristics, as it does of Christ Himself. "In the last days," says Isaias, "the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it."¹⁵ And again, foreseeing the growth of the Church among the Gentiles, Isaias exclaims: "Enlarge the place of thy tent, . . . thou shalt pass on to the right hand, and to the left: . . . the holy One of Israel, shall be called the God of all the earth."¹⁶ And again Isaias: "The multitude of the sea shall be converted to thee, the strength of the Gentiles shall come to thee."¹⁷ Speaking of Christ in the person of Solomon, the Psalmist declares: "He shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."¹⁸ And again: "I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession."¹⁹ "Declare his glory among the Gentiles: his wonders among all people."²⁰ "All kings of the earth shall adore him: all nations shall serve him."²¹ "He shall sprinkle many nations, . . .

for they to whom it was not told of him, have seen: and they that heard not, have beheld.”²² “All the ends of the earth . . . shall be converted to the Lord: and all the kindreds of the Gentiles shall adore in his sight. For the kingdom is the Lord’s; and he shall have dominion over the nations.”²³ With the joy of the whole earth is mount Sion founded, . . . the city of our God: God hath founded it for ever.”²⁴ Thus far Isaias and the Psalms.

The prophet Daniel, interpreting the dream of the king of Babylon, tells of that stone — by which he signifies the Church — that “became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth,” and which “shall stand for ever.”²⁵ And the prophet Malachias, looking down the ages, and seeing the glory of the Catholic Church and the perpetuity and ubiquity of its sacrificial worship, exclaims: “From the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation: for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts.”²⁶

When all the promises of the Old Law were fulfilled, the shadow yielded to the substance and the type gave way to the reality,—Christ appeared, “the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world.”²⁷ The Scriptures proclaim that the office or mission of Christ was a universal one. He was the redeemer and teacher of all men. The society which He came to found was to be truly Catholic, world-wide and perpetual. “The grace of God . . . hath appeared to all men.”²⁸ Jesus Christ “gave himself a redemption for all.”²⁹ “Therefore,” says St. Paul again, “as by the offence of one, unto all men to condemnation: so also by the justice of one, unto all men to justification.”³⁰ “He is the propitiation for our sins,” says St. John, “and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.”³¹ And in the Apocalypse we read: “Thou . . . hast redeemed us to God, in thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.”³² Elsewhere it is said: “Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.”³³ “And of

his kingdom there shall be no end.”³⁴ Christ’s Church was to endure. “I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”³⁵ “I will make a perpetual covenant with them.”³⁶

The Catholicity of the Church is beautifully portrayed in some of the parables of the Gospel. “And he said: To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? or to what parable shall we compare it? It is as a grain of mustard-seed; which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that are in the earth: and when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches, so that the birds of the air may dwell under the shadow thereof.”³⁷ “It is like to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”³⁸

In order to understand the Catholic character of the Church, it will be well to examine the commission under which it exists and operates, for the charter of a society generally discloses its nature and purpose, and sets forth its powers and privileges. In the last three verses of the twenty-

eighth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel we find the following words: "And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." In St. Mark we read: "And he said to them: Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature." ³⁹ We have, moreover, in the Acts of the Apostles, the words of our Lord: "You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth." ⁴⁰ From these texts we learn in what particular ways the Church is Catholic.

First, a Catholicity of territory, of place, of peoples, is indicated. "Go ye into the whole world." "Teach ye all nations." The Church is at home everywhere. The whole world is the field of its action. It is absurd to look upon the Catholic

Church as a foreign institution anywhere. Truth has rights in every land. Hence no nation can rightfully exclude a Church that is truly Catholic.

Secondly, these texts express a Catholicity of doctrine and practice. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The commission of the Church impels her to teach the whole message of Christ. She has no pet doctrine to preach, no partial message to propose. The whole truth is her burthen, whether written in books or preserved in tradition. All that Christ commanded her she must teach and the faithful must observe.

Thirdly, we notice, also, in this charter of the Church the promise of a Catholicity of time. "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." Not one day is excepted. Every century is included. The Church of Christ cannot cease to be, neither can it become apostate, without failing to be Catholic in time.

We learn, therefore, from the commission Christ gave that His Church must subsist in all ages, teach all nations, and maintain all truth. It must extend throughout the whole world terri-

torially, impart the entire evangel of truth doctrinally, and endure through all the ages temporally.

It will not be amiss to notice, somewhat in detail, how and in what sense the Church is to be Catholic in territory, in time and in truth. And first as to its universality in territory.

Formal Catholicity may be considered in two ways: either *de jure* or *de facto* — of right or of fact. I say formal Catholicity, because a mere material universality, without any bond of union, is no Catholicity at all, but a disjointed, discordant lot of fragments that go for nothing when we speak of a single, united society. You will find error everywhere with truth, but truth is one, error is multiple,— truth is formally universal, and the Church is formally universal. St. Augustine makes the distinction between formal and material universality very plain. He says: “The Church is everywhere and heresy is everywhere; but the Church is everywhere one and the same, whereas heresy is not the same but most different.”

I have said that the territorial universality of the Church may be considered in two ways —

de jure and *de facto*. Catholicity *de jure* is a property in the Church. This means that the Church has within itself, of its own right, a life and energy, an inherent aptitude, a virtue and efficacy, to spread out and to do the work of teaching the nations. It has within it something that gives it a claim on the consideration of all men, for it has that which adapts itself to the needs of all. It has within it something that spurns everything local, everything national, everything little. It is territorially universal in its very nature.

Now that intrinsic universality must bring forth fruit, it must produce its effect outside. The effect of internal, *de jure* power is the Catholicity *de facto*, which means the extrinsic manifestation of universality. It is this *de facto* universality that constitutes Catholicity as a mark of the true Church.

Catholicity territorially may be considered as either physical or moral. To say that the Church is physically Catholic of persons would mean that every individual in the whole world is a member of the Church. If the Church were physically Catholic of nations, every nation in the whole

world would have to be Catholic. To say that the Church is morally universal, means that the Church is morally present everywhere in the world, so that, by its splendor, its laws and customs, and by its visibility, it can be seen and known by every one, and distinguished from every other society, so as not to be confounded with or mistaken for any other. Moreover, we may ask whether territorial Catholicity requires that the Church be spread over all the earth at once, or whether it can come gradually over the earth and possibly depart, as a shadow passes over the land. In one case we would have simultaneous Catholicity, in the other we would have successive Catholicity.

Let me say, in the first place, that no one has ever held that the Church is to be physically Catholic of persons. The membership is not so extensive as the call. The invitation goes out to every one, but "all do not obey the gospel."⁴¹ There will always be in the world disbelievers and unbelievers. St. Paul says that "there must be also heresies: that they also, who are reproved, may be made manifest among you."⁴² If everybody were Catholic, there would not be so much merit in

Church membership. As it now is, the conflict is hard enough to require courage to keep the faith. Our Lord tells us ⁴³ that ‘many will come in his name and seduce many.’ And St. Paul foretells that “there shall be a time, when they will not endure sound doctrine: but according to their own desires, they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: and will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth.” ⁴⁴ “Many are called, but few are chosen,” says our Lord. ⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Christ’s purpose in founding the Church will be accomplished. Though one goes to his farm, another to his merchandise, and another stays at home with his wife, still the marriage will be filled with guests. Enough will enter the Church, enough will come to the banquet, to fill up the measure of Christ’s purpose. The Church can be Catholic without containing every man and woman in the world.

Nor, in order to hold the territorial Catholicity of the Church, is it required to prove that the Church must be physically present in every nation simultaneously. The Church will truly extend to all nations, but not necessarily so until the end of

the world approaches. Our Lord says: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come."⁴⁶ And St. Paul, writing to the Romans, intimates that the nations will enter the Church successively, and after all the rest the Jews will be converted and come in. "For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, of this mystery, . . . that blindness in part has happened in Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles should come in."⁴⁷

It suffices, then, for the territorial Catholicity of the Church, to show that it is morally present to all nations, and, considering simply its introduction among them, that its Catholicity is successive. Our Lord tells us "that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."⁴⁸ And the Acts of the Apostles give the words of St. Paul and Barnabas to the Jews who rejected their message: "To you it behoved us first to speak the word of God: but because you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life; behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord hath com-

manded us.”⁴⁹ St. Augustine, therefore, tells us “to hold to the Church designated by the words in the very mouth of our Lord, telling whence it was to begin and whither it was to extend.” He says it was to begin at Jerusalem, and to extend to all nations. Its innate power to spread proves its essential Catholicity.

The unfolding of the internal power of the Church happens successively, not only in territorial growth but also in doctrinal development. On the one hand, peoples are gradually converted and nations are added to the fold, while, on the other hand, the truths entrusted to the Church encounter from time to time new errors. This necessitates new statements of doctrine, and the truth is made clearer by the contrast with error. We must not, therefore, say that the true doctrine changes, but rather that error, which is like a chameleon, assumes new attitudes towards the truth, making new definitions for old truths necessary.

Although it would be enough for territorial Catholicity to show the gradual spread of the Church, and its successive introduction among the nations, still it is no less true that the Church

even in its very infancy could be known as territorially Catholic. The growth of a baby may portend the future giant, the foot may proclaim a Hercules. The Church's Catholicity in doctrine and in time is shown by its charter to be absolute. It must teach the whole truth through every age to the consummation of the world. The true Church of Christ is therefore a society Catholic both *de jure* and *de facto*. It not only ought to be Catholic, but it is Catholic. Let us now look at the Church as it stands revealed in history, and see if it corresponds with the idea we have given of it and the predictions and promises made concerning it.

Immediately after the Ascension of our Lord, His disciples went back to Jerusalem, and huddled themselves together in one place for fear of the Jews. They made there a Novena, from Ascension Thursday until the second Sunday following, which was Pentecost. "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of

them.”⁵⁰ This was as the Lord had promised them, saying: “You shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”⁵¹ The Church was now complete. The “Spirit of truth” had come to abide with it forever, making it henceforth “the pillar and ground of the truth.” The Apostles, who before were weak and cowardly and sceptical, now became strong and courageous and faithful. “They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, . . . the wonderful works of God.”⁵² They rushed forth from the conventicle and addressed the multitudes in the city. “Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven.”—“Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphilia, Egypt, and the parts of Lybia, about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome. Jews also, and proselytes, Cretes, and Arabians.”⁵³

I would advise every one to read St. Peter’s sermon on that day. You will find it in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Many of those who heard him “had compunction in their heart,”

and they inquired, "What shall we do?" To whom Peter answered, "Do penance, and be baptized. . . . For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are far off, whomsoever the Lord our God shall call." The same chapter tells us, "They, therefore, that received his word were baptized: and there were added in that day about three thousand souls. . . . And the Lord increased daily together such as should be saved."

Doubtless among this first three thousand converts were representatives of every nation then assembled at Jerusalem. It was as if the motley crowd of our Midway Plaisance had been converted in a day. The Church was territorially Catholic at its birth. It was no narrow, national thing, but a Catholic institution from the start. It began to grow. It spread throughout Judea. Persecutions set in, Peter was imprisoned, and Paul sent in chains even to Rome. The blood of martyrs became the seed of the Church. St. Paul, writing to the Colossians,⁵⁴ speaks of the gospel as having been already "preached in all the creation that is under heaven." In the Epistle to the Romans⁵⁵ he speaks of their faith as having been "spoken of

in the whole world." Again, he refers to the gospel preached as the source of faith, and quotes the words of the Psalmist, "Yes, verily, their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world." ⁵⁶

The rapidity with which the Church spread, in spite of all manner of obstacles—in spite of the machinations of the wicked world, in spite of all human and hellish opposition, in spite of the fact that it required self-sacrifice and purity of life to be a Christian—proves that the Church was propagated by a miracle of God's power. Tertullian, who lived in the second century, says in his *Apologia*, "We are but of yesterday, and already have we filled your cities, towns, islands, your council-halls and camps, . . . the palace, senate, forum; we have left you only the temples." ⁵⁷ And St. Pascianus could tell us in his day, "My surname is Christian, my given name is Catholic." St. Irenaeus, in his time, compares the Church even to the sunlight that illumines the whole world. And St. Augustine, in the fifth century, says, "The Christian religion is to be held by us, and the communion of that

Church which is Catholic, and is called Catholic, not only by its own but also by all its enemies.” ⁵⁸

The Church, instinct with divine life, continued on in the world, converting individuals, correcting their vices, renovating the nations, bringing them all under the sweet yoke of Christ, upbuilding them and making them into new peoples. In places, at times, ‘because iniquity abounded and the charity of some had grown cold,’ a crisis came. Heresy arose, and schism assailed the Church. It was said of the fifth century that the world awoke one morning to find itself Arian. The Greek schism, begun in the ninth century, took final effect in the fifteenth. In the sixteenth century came the protestant upheaval.

The question to-day for every one to settle is, Which is the Catholic Church? We have seen that the Church of Christ must be truly Catholic. The author of “The Debatable Land,” though a protestant, says, “Catholicity is a necessary element of any faith that is to be the religion of civilization.” And we may add that Catholicity is a necessary element of any faith that is to be recognized as the true religion of Christ. All who

use the Apostles' Creed say, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," but can any one of the sects, or any of the schismatical bodies, establish a claim to Catholicity? Can all of them put together make anything more than a pretence of being Catholic? Whence have they origin? Where is their bond of union? What about differences in doctrine?

Now there is one Church, and only one, that can justly claim the title of Catholic. One Church alone is Catholic every way you look at it. All others are not Catholic in any way you take them. They are every one of them recent affairs, compared with the Catholic Church. The fact that they began long since the Ascension of our Lord, proves that none of them are Catholic in time. An examination into their tenets will disclose that none of them have Catholicity of doctrine. None of them teach the whole truth. Any denomination that says that the Bible simply is the rule of faith, and the Bible only, has not the whole gospel of God. And this defect is still more conspicuous since even great portions of the Bible are rejected. If, however, the sects taught every truth, of those which Christ taught, except one, they could not

claim Catholicity of truth; and the fact of their closer resemblance to Christ's Church in doctrine would only make them more to be dreaded as counterfeits. For, says the writer of a tract on the orthodox faith, against the Arians, "There is nothing more dangerous than those heretics who admit nearly the whole cycle of doctrine, and yet by one word, as with a drop of poison, infect the real and simple faith taught by our Lord and handed down by the Apostolic tradition." It is nothing to boast of that the sects teach some truth — of course they teach some truth, but the Church which all are commanded to hear must teach all truth.

St. Augustine, arguing against the heretics of his times, says: "In many things they are with me, in a few they are not: what will it profit?" And again he says, "You who believe what you like of the Gospels, and believe not what you like, believe yourselves rather than the Gospels."

None of the sects are Catholic in territory. Nearly two hundred years elapsed after the reformation before they made any pretence at missionary work, or showed any inclination to spread over

the world. In the beginning it was a protestant practice to identify religion with the nation. We must acknowledge, however, that during the last century wonderful efforts have been made to propagate protestantism. Fabulous sums of money have been spent on foreign missions, but the results are ridiculously insignificant. Not one nation or tribe has yet been converted, or is in a fair way to be converted. The curse of Babel seems to have fallen not only upon their tongues, but upon their thoughts. The missionaries may be, as the phrase goes, "good fellows," decent, scholarly men, fine teachers, but their pupils are infidels rather than Christians. "By their fruits you shall know them."

The creeds of all the sects vary not only one with another, but they disagree within themselves, making impossible even the semblance of Catholicity, which necessarily implies both unity and harmony. High church and low church, broad gauge and narrow gauge, old school and new school, hard shell and soft shell, church north and church south, and a thousand other soubriquets of subdivision, intimate the internal divergences of the sects.

Protestantism has changed. A distinguished professor in one of the German universities said recently that he could write on his thumb nail all the original doctrines that survive unaltered in the locality where the reformation began. It is something, however, to be thankful for, that those creeds can change. We rejoice that a man can be a good Presbyterian now without believing with his ancestors that the Pope is Anti-christ. " 'Tis a consummation devoutly to be wish'd " that soon no scion of Calvin need subscribe to the blasphemy which accuses God of damning souls for His own delight, independent of the morality of their deeds. Hasten the day when all the sects shall have changed until every semblance of their former pride and littleness and perversity has passed away!

The old Church alone does not change. She goes back to the beginning. She is Catholic in time. Years do not destroy her youthful vigor. She is spread over all the world. Wherever the gospel of God is to be preached, wherever men are to be saved, she exists. Every nation feels her presence. She is universal in territory. Through her chief pastor she surveys the whole world. She

exercises the prerogatives of a universal society. To-day she appoints an archbishop in America, to-morrow she erects a vicariate in Africa, the next day a cardinal is created in Europe, a patriarch is appointed in Asia, or the pallium is sent to Australia. Here a university is established, there an order of religious is approved. Finally an Ecumenical Council is called, and behold the crowds as they assemble,—cardinals and legates, patriarchs and primates, archbishops, bishops, generals of orders, abbots and heads of congregations, doctors and theologians, from America and Europe, from Asia and Africa and the islands of the seas, Latin and Greek, Armenian and Copt, all assembling under one roof. This is the Church that is territorially Catholic, whose membership is gathered “out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.” ⁵⁹

This Church, too, is Catholic in doctrine. It has never ceased, and never will cease, to teach the whole Gospel. What a favorite she might have become with the powerful ones of the world if she could have trimmed the truth according to the pattern they preferred. But no, the old Church

will not bend, she must teach the whole truth. She can say with St. Paul, "For woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel."⁶⁰ One reason why we know that the Church teaches the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, is the fact that her most bitter adversaries have never proved the contrary. When they wish to assail her on matters of doctrine, they invariably form some fiction and then try to demolish their own work. They attribute to us doctrines which we have never believed, and give us credit for conduct which our lives repudiate. Learn well the teachings of the Church, and you will not find among them a doctrine that is immoral or a dogma that is irrational. For

"Truth has such a face and such a mien,
As to be loved needs only to be seen."⁶¹

Besides, the Church is Catholic because she appeals to all peoples and all classes. Hers is not the creed of any one set. Rich and poor, learned and illiterate, find in her doctrine and worship the food that sustains and sanctifies the soul. She is the Church of all of God's children. Says Matthew Arnold: "This is why the man of imagi-

nation; nay, the philosopher, too, will always have a weakness for the Catholic Church, because of the rich treasure of human life which has been stored within her pale. Who has seen the poor in other churches as they are seen in Catholic Churches? . . . Catholics in general feel themselves to have drawn not only their religion from the Church; they feel themselves to have drawn from her, too, their art and poetry and culture."

It is a proverb among lawyers that possession is nine points of the law. There is one Church, and only one, that possesses the name Catholic. That fact makes it seem quite probable that those denominations that want the title lack the thing. "They went out from us," says St. John, "but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have remained with us." ⁶² To reiterate what I have already said, God has allowed them to depart that we may have the merit of a greater tenacity to truth. Heretical sects have fattened on fallen Catholics, whom they have been appointed by Providence to punish for apostasy and infidelity.

The word Catholic is a glorious title. It is

associated with joy and with sorrow, and we love it for both reasons,—just as a mother cherishes her child, both for its own beauty and for the pains it has cost her. Cardinal Gibbons says: “We have exclusively borne this glorious appellation in troubled times, when the assumption of this venerable title exposed us to insult, persecution, and death; and to attempt to deprive us of it at this late hour, would be as fruitless as the efforts of the French Revolutionists who sought to uproot all traces of the old civilization by assigning new names to the days and seasons of the year.” The Cardinal refers here to those sects which, while their official titles stamp them as what you please, still, when it suits their purpose, try to assume the name of Catholic. A want of propriety often allows them to call us by wrong names — Romish, Popish, Papist, and the rest. But a sneer can never rob the Church of the glory which the title Catholic proclaims,—the Church of all times, the Church of all truth, the Church of all men.

We have reason to rejoice in our Church membership. We should be proud of the Catholic

name. We have no cause to fear for the triumph of truth, or for the success of the Catholic Church. Christ's Church will flourish and endure. "For the mountains shall be moved, and the hills shall tremble: but my mercy shall not depart from thee, and the covenant of my peace shall not be moved." ⁶³ "And the children of them that afflict thee, shall come bowing down to thee, and all that slandered thee shall worship the steps of thy feet, and shall call thee the city of the Lord, the Sion of the holy One of Israel." ⁶⁴

St. Ignatius said long ago, "*Ibi Christus ubi est ecclesia catholica*" — "Where the Catholic Church is, there is Christ."

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- ¹ Matt. 10: 5. ² Gal. 3: 24. ³ Gen. 12: 3. ⁴ Gen. 49: 10. ⁵ Isai. 11: 1. ⁶ Jer. 23: 5. ⁷ Gen. 26: 4. ⁸ Gen. 28: 14. ⁹ Gal. 3: 16. ¹⁰ John 4: 25. ¹¹ Isai. 42: 6. ¹² Isai. 49: 6. ¹³ Jer. 31: 31, 32. ¹⁴ Ps. 39: 7, 8. ¹⁵ Isai. 2: 2. ¹⁶ Isai. 54: 2, 3, 5. ¹⁷ Isai. 60: 5. ¹⁸ Ps. 71: 8. ¹⁹ Ps. 2: 8. ²⁰ Ps. 95: 3. ²¹ Ps. 71: 11. ²² Isai. 52: 15. ²³ Ps. 21: 28, 29. ²⁴ Ps. 47: 3, 9. ²⁵ Dan. 2: 35-44. ²⁶ Mal. 1: 11.

- ²⁷ John 1:9. ²⁸ Titus 2:11. ²⁹ 1 Tim. 2:6.
³⁰ Rom. 5:18. ³¹ 1 John 2:2. ³² Apoc. 5:9.
³³ Matt. 8:11. ³⁴ Luke 1:33. ³⁵ Matt. 16:18.
³⁶ Isai. 61:8. ³⁷ Mark 4:30-32. ³⁸ Luke 13:21.
³⁹ Mark 16:15. ⁴⁰ Acts 1:8. ⁴¹ Rom. 10:16.
⁴² 1 Cor. 11:19. ⁴³ Matt. 24:5. ⁴⁴ 2 Tim. 4:3, 4.
⁴⁵ Matt. 22:14. ⁴⁶ Matt. 24:14. ⁴⁷ Rom. 11:25.
⁴⁸ Luke 24:47. ⁴⁹ Acts 13:46, 47. ⁵⁰ Acts 2:2, 3.
⁵¹ Acts 1:5. ⁵² Acts 2:4, 11. ⁵³ Acts 2:5, 9-11.
⁵⁴ Col. 1:23. ⁵⁵ Rom. 1:8. ⁵⁶ Rom. 10:18.
⁵⁷ Apolog., ch. 37. ⁵⁸ Ver. Rel., ch. 7, c. 7, n. 12.
⁵⁹ Apoc. 5:9. ⁶⁰ 1 Cor. 9:16. ⁶¹ Dryden.
⁶² 1 John 2:19. ⁶³ Isai. 54:10. ⁶⁴ Isai. 60:14.

V.

THE APOSTOLICITY OF THE
CHURCH.

THE APOSTOLICITY OF THE CHURCH.

Upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen all the day, and all the night; they shall never hold their peace." Isai. 62:6.

"And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them, the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Apoc. 21:14.

"And when day was come, he called unto him his disciples; and he chose twelve of them (whom also he named apostles:) Simon, whom he surnamed Peter, and Andrew, his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew. Matthew and Thomas, James, the son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who is called Zelotes. And Jude, the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, who was the traitor." Luke 6:13-16.

"As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." John 20:21.

"He . . . gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes." Matt. 14:19.

"I believe in . . . One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church." Nicene Creed, A. D. 325.

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Thus far I have tried to demonstrate the existence of the Church, and to prove its first three properties, namely: its Unity, its Holiness and its Catholicity. My purpose at the present time is to prove that it is also Apostolic. Apostolicity is the fourth mark of the true Church, and one of its essential attributes.

The word "Apostle" signifies "one sent." It is a term that implies a relationship, for in some way it connotes both the messenger and the sender. As applied to the Church, it expresses its ministerial cause, the Apostles, and it implies its dependence on the primary cause, Christ. To say that the Church is Christian, is to name its primary cause; to say that it is Apostolic, is to tell its ministerial cause.

All Christians believe that the Church of Christ is in some sense Apostolic. Nothing is more clearly expressed in the Holy Scriptures, or more fully confirmed by history, than the following propositions: First, that Christ founded a church that was to be truly apostolic; second, that the

apostolic doctrine and precept and example were to be the norma for the Church, and the pattern and guide always for every true believer; third, that the commission given to the Apostles was given in perpetuity.

The term "Apostolic," when applied to the Church, is synonymous with "genuine," "accredited," "authorized," "true." A church which is not Apostolic is confessedly spurious, and at once proclaims itself an upstart, an imposter, a sham. It follows, then, that the Church which is directly derived from the Apostles is the only true Church. By direct derivation or lineal descent, we mean coming down in unbroken succession from the Apostles, and having its orders, doctrine and mission from them. The Church that is really Apostolic must have in itself everything that the society of the Apostles originally had. It must be identical in doctrine, in orders and in authority. It must teach all the truths committed to the Apostles, and it must succeed as an organization in such a manner as to be strictly the same society. It is not enough for it to teach all the doctrines of the Apostles, if it

lacks either their orders or their jurisdiction. Nor is it enough to have the orders of the Apostles if either their doctrine or mission is wanting. "*Bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quocumque defectu,*" is an axiom that has application here. A thing is good only when good every way, a thing is bad if bad in any way. No church is truly Apostolic that teaches a doctrine at variance with those taught and handed down by the Apostles. Neither is a church Apostolic unless its orders come down in an unbroken succession from the Apostles. Finally, no church is Apostolic that is not authorized and commissioned by apostolic continuity.

I have said that Christ founded a Church truly Apostolic. Scripture tells us of the call and commission of the Apostles. Upon them, as a foundation, Christ built His Church, and He sent them to teach His doctrines and extend His kingdom.

First.—Christ called His Apostles. St. Matthew's Gospel, fourth chapter, gives a simple narrative of the individual call of four of the twelve. He says: "And Jesus walking by the

sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea, (for they were fishers,) and he saith to them: Come ye after me, and I will make you to be fishers of men. And they immediately leaving their nets, followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in a ship with Zebedee, their father, mending their nets: and he called them. And they forthwith left their nets and father, and followed him.”¹ And again, St. Matthew speaks of his own call: “And when Jesus passed on from thence, he saw a man sitting in the custom-house, named Matthew: and he saith to him: Follow me. And he arose up, and followed him.”² In St. Mark we read of Christ’s calling the twelve publicly: “And going up into a mountain, he called unto him whom he would himself: and they came to him. And he made that twelve should be with him.”³ St. Luke says: “And when day was come, he called unto him his disciples; and he chose twelve of them (whom also he named apostles:) Simon, whom he surnamed

Peter, and Andrew, his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James, the son of Alpheus, and Simon, who is called Zelotes. And Jude, the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot.”⁴ “You have not chosen me,” said our Lord to the Apostles, “but I have chosen you.”⁵ And again: “Have not I chosen you twelve?”⁶ Prominence is given to the call of Peter, by placing him first and by the special manner in which our Lord promised to make him the head of His Church.—“Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church.”⁷ Hence St. Paul, writing to the Ephesians, could say: “You are . . . built upon the foundation of the apostles.”⁸ And St. John, in the Apocalypse: “The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them, the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”⁹ It is evident from all these passages that Christ called twelve Apostles, upon whom He was to found His Church.

Second.—Not only did Christ call His Apostles, but He gave them authority and sent them forth to evangelize and save the world. “Having called his twelve apostles together, he gave them

power.”¹⁰ And St. Mark says: “And he called the twelve; and began to send them two and two, and gave them power over unclean spirits.”¹¹ And St. Luke: “Then calling together the twelve apostles, he gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.”¹² “These twelve,” says St. Matthew,¹³ “Jesus sent.” And He told them what to do and what to say: “And going preach, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand.”¹⁴

As yet all these commissions were local. The Apostles were working in Judea, announcing Christ’s personal visits. They were forbidden to go “into the way of the Gentiles,” for it was God’s design to give the Jews the first chance to accept the Saviour.—“Go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”¹⁵ But later the scope of the commission was made world-wide. In St. Mark our Lord says to the Apostles: “Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be condemned.”¹⁶ And in St. John He

says: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you."¹⁷ And St. John adds: "He breathed on them; and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."¹⁸ We find also, in St. John, as a part of that ever-memorable prayer of our Lord, these words addressed by Him to the Father: "As thou hast sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."¹⁹ Finally, we read in the last chapter of St. Matthew: "And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth." What a grand exordium, appealing to the source of all authority! And He continues: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."²⁰ And to enable them to fulfill this arduous mission — for it was no easy thing for twelve poor, simple men to go forth and face the wicked, heedless world, and teach all nations the truths of Christ — Our Lord promised His perpetual help

to them, for He added: "And, behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."²¹ And again He said: "I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you."²² For the same reason, in that prayer to which I have already referred, Christ asks His heavenly Father to "sanctify them in truth."²³ Elsewhere He promises them the power and presence of the Holy Spirit: "He breathed on them; and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost."²⁴ "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth."²⁵ Again: "But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you."²⁶

Hence we see Christ selected His Apostles, and commissioned them, and moreover promised to give them all things necessary for carrying out their mission through all time. Our Lord assures us in St. Luke that those whom He sent would go with His power and His authority. "He that heareth you," He says, "heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me. And he that

despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.”²⁷ And again: “If he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican.”²⁸ Let us be careful, therefore, never to reject the authorized messengers of God.

Third.—Not only did Christ select and commission His Apostles, and promise them help, power and authority, but the Apostles from the beginning claimed that they were so commissioned. They were not self-constituted leaders, “desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither the things they say, nor whereof they affirm.”²⁹ They claimed to speak for Christ, by His authority, and in His name. St. Paul says: “We have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith in all nations for his name.”³⁰ Their word was not an *if*, and a *perhaps*, and a *maybe*. “For our preaching which was to you, was not, *It is*, and, *It is not*.”³¹ “Our exhortation was not of error, nor of uncleanness, nor in deceit, but as we were approved by God that the gospel should be committed to us; even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God, who proveth our hearts.”³² “For we are not as many adulterat-

ing the word of God, but with sincerity, but as from God, before God, in Christ we speak.”³³ Again St. Paul says: “He hath placed in us the word of reconciliation. For Christ therefore, we are ambassadors, God as it were exhorting by us.”³⁴ And again: “Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God.”³⁵ And he adds: “But in all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God.”³⁶ Again St. Paul says: “Therefore we also give thanks to God without ceasing; because that when you had received of us the word of the hearing of God, you received it not as the word of men, but (as it is indeed) the word of God, who worketh in you that have believed.”³⁷ So St. John, in answering the objections proposed by the first heretics, would lay it down as the test of truth and right doctrine: “We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us. He that is not of God, heareth us not. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”³⁸

Thus we see that Christ selected the Apostles and authorized their teachings. If they have

taught us wrong, Christ is the author of the error. We notice, moreover, that God reserves to Himself the right to choose the ministers of His word. Hence that promise by the prophet Jeremias, "And I will give you pastors according to my own heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and doctrine." ³⁹ Hence again, St. Paul, writing to the Romans, asks: "How shall they believe him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent?" ⁴⁰ "You have not chosen me: but I have chosen you," ⁴¹ said our Lord to the Apostles. And St. Paul, writing to the Hebrews, declares: "Neither doth any man take the honour to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was." ⁴² In the Epistle to the Ephesians he says: "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." ⁴³ And again, St. Paul says to the Corinthians: "God indeed hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly doctors." ⁴⁴

And of himself he says, in the 1st Epistle to Timothy: "I am appointed a preacher and an apostle."⁴⁵ And in Colossians he says: "I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God, which is given me towards you, that I may fulfil the word of God."⁴⁶

It is an error, therefore, to suppose that the preacher gets his power from the people. This same St. Paul, who was so miraculously converted, and so singularly called to the ministry, did not begin his work of his own motion, but had recourse to the established authority of the Church. He was duly ordained and commissioned by the Church, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles: "And as they were ministering to the Lord, and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them: Separate me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have taken them. Then they fasting, and praying, and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away. So they being sent by the Holy Ghost, went to Selucia: and from thence they sailed to Cyprus."⁴⁷ St. Paul did not establish an independent community, nor a people's church, nor a Paul's church, simply because he

was called differently from the rest. He was not a bushwhacker in the war for truth. All his lifetime he recognized the authority of the other Apostles, and submitted to the constituted head. When he had some hard questions to solve, he went up to Jerusalem ⁴⁸ to consult with the Apostles and the priests there. "After three years, I went to Jerusalem to see Peter, and I tarried with him fifteen days," ⁴⁹ he says. And again: "And I went up according to revelation: and conferred with them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but apart with them who seemed to be something: lest perhaps I should run, or had run in vain." ⁵⁰

A careful study of the manner in which Christ instituted the Church, and the way in which He selected and commissioned His Apostles, ought to settle forever the assumptions of self-constituted teachers. It was of self-appointed preachers God spoke by the mouth of Jeremias: "I did not send prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied." ⁵¹ Christ is the door. The shepherd of the sheep entereth by the door. "He that entereth not by the door into

the sheepfold," says our Lord, "but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber." ⁵²

I have at times felt compunction for some things which I have said concerning certain innovators in religion, lest perhaps I had spoken so as to reflect on their followers also. But every one who knows me at all should believe that I would not willingly hurt the most tender feeling of any one on a matter of this kind. Yet when we hear the words of our Lord, calling those who would assume the office of the ministry without His sanction, 'robbers' and 'thieves,' we must admit that Christ gives a harder blow to those innovators than I could with any words of mine.

The pretension to an extraordinary mission, independent of apostolic authority, by would-be guides of mankind, is but one phase of a human insanity that is more common than many of us have any idea of. The world has held, and does hold, no small number of false prophets, cranks, and humbugs. Scarcely a parish exists in which some one cannot be found who is perfectly sure of having had a divine call to regulate and run everything religious, political, social and domestic,

according to his own whim. In my experience I have met three or four persons each pretending to be Christ, and half a dozen claiming to be the Blessed Virgin Mary, but they were all hopelessly insane. Now, is it to be wondered at that some of these people, rising above the rest in madness and deception, have succeeded in making considerable noise here and there in the world?

All innovators take for a first principle that the provisions which Christ made for continuing His work in the world were inadequate for the purpose. They take for a certainty that the promises of Christ have failed. But what evidence do they bring to prove their claim? What credentials or authority do they produce to show their mission? What work do they perform that is calculated to move a sensible person to an act of faith? The world never produced a fool that could not find another to follow him. These are the "blind, and leaders of the blind," of whom our Lord spoke when He said, "If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit."⁵³ To such St. Paul alludes in his Epistle to Timothy, when he says, "Some going astray, are turned aside unto

vain babbling: desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither the things they say, nor whereof they affirm.”⁵⁴ And again, “Know also this, that, in the last days, shall come on dangerous times: men shall be lovers of themselves, . . . haughty, . . . traitors, stubborn, puffed up, . . . having an appearance indeed of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Now these avoid.”⁵⁵

I have said that the Apostolic doctrine and example were to be the pattern of faith and practice for every true believer. “The doctrine of the Apostles,” says St. Irenaeus, who lived in the second century, “is the true faith which is known to us through the episcopal succession . . . which has reached even unto our age.”⁵⁶ And Tertullian says: “It is therefore clear that all doctrine which agrees with that of the apostolic churches, the parent stock and original centres of the faith, must be regarded as the truth, holding without hesitation that the Church received it from the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ, and Christ from God. We are in communion with the Apostolic Churches,” he adds, “and by the very fact that

they agree among themselves we have testimony of the truth.”⁵⁷ And hence St. Paul, writing to the Galatians, says: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema.”⁵⁸ And again he says: “If any one preach to you a gospel besides that which you have received, let him be anathema.”⁵⁹

I have already referred to chapter fifteen of the Acts of the Apostles for other considerations, but its last verse is one of many in Scripture specially of value in this connection, as showing the importance of an apostolic model. St. Paul, when he visited the Churches, commanded “them to keep the precepts of the apostles and the ancients.”⁶⁰ So we read, also: “And they were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread.”⁶¹ Again St. Paul, writing to the Hebrews, says: “Remember your prelates who have spoken the word of God to you: whose faith follow.”⁶² And presently he adds: “Be not led away with various and strange doctrines.”⁶³ And again: “Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they

watch, as being to render an account of your souls.”⁶⁴ In the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, he says: “Therefore, brethren, stand fast; and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word, or by our epistle.”⁶⁵ “For,” as he says to the clergy of Ephesus, “I have not spared to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”⁶⁶

Finally, the commission given to the Apostles was bestowed in perpetuity. It did not expire with their mortal life. This is evident from the end and scope of the institution they represented. Their society was to be Catholic in time, as well as in territory and in truth. Our Lord’s help and presence, as also that of the Holy Ghost, was promised as perpetual. “Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.”⁶⁷ “I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever.”⁶⁸ The Apostles provided for successors. They added co-workers to their number, and ordained and consecrated those who were to follow them. Scarcely had Judas, who betrayed our Lord, left his place vacant, when

Matthias was chosen in his stead, as we read in the 1st chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, thus fulfilling the words of the Psalmist, "And his bishopric let another take."⁶⁹ St. Paul, writing to Timothy, commands him to continue to preach the gospel. "I charge thee," he says, "before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, by his coming, and his kingdom: preach the word."⁷⁰ And in the same Epistle he says: "The things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also."⁷¹ And in writing to Titus St. Paul declares: "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldest ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee."⁷² Moreover, in the Acts of the Apostles, we read how Barnabas and Paul, "when they had ordained to them priests in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord."⁷³ Is there anything further needed to prove that the Apostles were to have successors, and that their mission was to be permanent?

That the Church is indefectible will be shown at another time. For the present, we may legitimately assume that the Church of Christ is still in the world. The vital point for us to ascertain is, which of all the existing churches is that apostolic Church of Christ? Or again, which of all the churches which use the Apostles' Creed, and admit at least tacitly the words of the Nicene Creed — "I believe in . . . One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church," — can prove for itself an apostolic title?

Surely, the religious upstart of our day, who claims to be inspired of God to rule and regulate the world by his own crotchet, cannot claim Apostolicity. Those who invent doctrines unheard of before are not the successors of the Apostles. Novelty and error are children of the same father — the father of lies. Those who have lost the line of valid ministers leading back to apostolic times, cannot plead the possession of Apostolicity. Where there is no ordination, no priesthood, no authority, no power, Apostolicity is out of the question. Even if valid orders exist, where jurisdiction is lacking there is no real Apostolicity.

Schism, as well as heresy, destroys apostolic succession.

Now I hold that there is one Church, and only one, that can vindicate its Apostolic title, which ought to be done by showing its origin and the unbroken succession of its orders and mission from the Apostles, and by proving its doctrinal identity with their teachings. Writing against those who had separated from the Catholic Church in the second century, Tertullian says: "Let them, therefore, show forth the beginning of their churches. Let them unfold the order of their bishops, so by a succession running from the beginning each bishop may have for antecedent and author some one of the Apostles, or some apostolic man who persevered with the Apostles. This is the manner Apostolic Churches should make their reckoning." ⁷⁴ And St. Augustine, in his Psalm against the Donatists, says: "Come, brethren, if you have a mind to be engrafted in the vine. It is a pity to see you lie in this manner lopped off from the stock. Reckon up the prelates in the very See of Peter, and in that order of Fathers see which has succeeded which. This

is the rock over which the proud gates of hell prevail not." ⁷⁵

The Church which is called Catholic and Roman is the only Church whose line of pontiffs and prelates and priests runs back to the beginning. Two hundred fifty-eight popes, from Peter to Leo XIII., have occupied the See of Rome. There is nothing to obscure or invalidate their title to the Apostolic See. As Leo XIII. followed Pius IX. and he Gregory XVI., so all the rest back to the first century, when Clement succeeded Cletus, and Cletus Linus, and Linus Peter, to whom Christ said: "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." ⁷⁶ The vigilance of the Church at every ordination, and at the consecration of every Bishop, makes doubt impossible concerning the valid succession of pastors. Besides, her bitterest adversaries cannot gainsay her claim to Apostolicity. No time later than that of the Apostles can be assigned as her origin, nor can one break be pointed out in her orders or mission. All this is so evident that Apostolicity is not only a property of that Church, but it stands out also as a

mark that identifies her with the Church founded by Christ.

But some will say, though admitting the Apostolic line of orders and authority, still the Catholic Church has fallen away from the faith and practice of the beginning, and consequently ceased to be Apostolic. To answer this charge fully would require much time and space, as we would have to discuss at length every doctrine and precept of the Apostles and of the Church. It will suffice, however, for our purpose here, to compare briefly a few of the principal doctrines, to show that the Church now teaches the same things that Christ and His Apostles taught. We can easily ascertain if these doctrines are held elsewhere, and so satisfy ourselves as to whether the old Church is Apostolic or not in doctrine.

First, take the matter of fasting. Our Saviour fasted and He enjoined fasting upon His followers, prescribing rules for the observance of fasts. "He (Jesus) had fasted forty days and forty nights." ⁷⁷ "When the bridegroom shall be taken away . . . then they shall fast." ⁷⁸ "When you fast, be not as the hypocrites, sad." ⁷⁹ "When

thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face.”⁸⁰ The Apostles fasted, as we read: “They were ministering to the Lord, and fasting.”⁸¹ “And when they had ordained to them priests in every church, and had prayed with fasting.”⁸² Christ said: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself.”⁸³ St. Paul says: “Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth.”⁸⁴

Now, which of all the churches follows the Apostolic doctrine of fasting and bodily mortification? Is it not the Catholic Church alone? Must not every Priest when he says Mass be fasting from midnight? Do not every one of the faithful fast when they approach Holy Communion? Is not every Priest who receives Orders obliged to be fasting, and the Bishop who ordains him? Are there not days and seasons appointed by the Church for fasting? Outside of the Catholic Church where can you find the Apostolic practice?

Take the Sacrament of Confirmation. “By the imposition of the hands of the apostles, the Holy Ghost was given.”⁸⁵ Peter and John “laid their

hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”⁸⁶ “When Paul had imposed his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them.”⁸⁷ Do not our Bishops do the same? While none of the sects have a semblance of Confirmation, except the Episcopalians, and with them it is not a Sacrament but a ceremony. What the Lutherans call Confirmation, is simply a renewal of baptismal vows.

Take the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. St. James says: “Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him.”⁸⁸ A very great part of the Catholic Priest’s time is taken up attending the sick and in administering Extreme Unction. Outside the Catholic Church, Extreme Unction is not considered a Sacrament, and the practice of anointing is generally derided.

Take the doctrine of the Eucharist. St. Matthew describes how our Lord instituted this Sac-

rament. "And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke: and gave to his disciples, and said: Take ye, and eat: this is my body. And taking the chalice, he gave thanks; and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins."⁸⁹ And St. Paul tells us, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke, and said: Take ye, and eat: this is my body which shall be delivered for you: this do for the commemoration of me. In like manner also the chalice, after he had supped, saying: This chalice is the new testament in my blood."⁹⁰ Our Lord said: "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you."⁹¹ And again St. Paul says: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?"⁹² "Therefore," he says again, "who-

soever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord.”⁹³

Among the modern sects, not one believes in the Eucharist as a Sacrifice, or even as a Sacrament really containing the Body and Blood of Christ. Most of the sects try to prove that, when our Lord said, “This is my body,” He meant, This is not my body. Catholics, on the contrary, believe Christ said what He meant and meant what He said.

Take the doctrine of marriage. Our Lord declares: “Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.”⁹⁴ “And if the wife shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.”⁹⁵ “Every one that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.”⁹⁶ And St. Paul says: “To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her husband. And if she depart, that she remain unmarried,

or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife.”⁹⁷ The Catholic Church is alone in teaching the indissolubility of the marriage tie. She opposes polygamy of every kind. Protestantism sprang largely from a disregard for the unity of the marriage bond. One-half million divorces yearly disgrace the records of our country. We need no other token to tell us how far the teaching of the sects has drifted from the standards of the Apostles.

Finally, take the evangelical counsels. Our Lord, by word and example, counseled perfection. “I have given you an example,”⁹⁸ He said. “Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect.”⁹⁹ To attain perfection, He recommended the states of virginity and holy poverty. When the young man asked our Lord what he should do to be saved, he was answered: “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.”¹⁰⁰ But when he wished to know what he must do to be perfect, our Lord said to him: “Go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, . . . and come, follow me.”¹⁰¹ St. Paul says, “I would that all men were even as myself,” speaking of his own life of

virginity, "but," he adds, "every one hath his proper gift from God. . . . But I say to the unmarried, . . . it is good for them if they so continue, even as I." ¹⁰² St. Paul counsels virginity, though he teaches that not all can receive this counsel. And our Lord says: "All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given. . . . He that can take, let him take it." ¹⁰³ Like Christ and St. Paul, the Catholic clergy and many of the faithful bind themselves to a life of perpetual continency, and many of them to the practice of poverty; and by their example prove that man can be pure and woman chaste, and that heaven is higher than all the wealth of the world. Outside of the Catholic Church, those counsels are set at naught. Voluntary poverty is looked upon as insanity, and virginity as an impossibility.

We need not dwell longer on the matter of Apostolic doctrine. We may be permitted here to pass over predestination, good works, and the infallibility of the Church, as these matters are taken up elsewhere. On the divinity of our Lord, the Holy Trinity, the future life, the eternity of hell, original sin, the necessity of baptism, and many

other doctrines, but one Church remains sound and unshaken. That is the Church which is truly Apostolic, not only in doctrine but in derivation.

“Stand ye on the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, which is the good way, and walk ye in it: and you shall find refreshment for your souls.”¹⁰⁴

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- ¹ Matt. 4: 18-22. ² Matt. 9: 9. ³ Mark 3: 13, 14.
⁴ Luke 6: 13-16. ⁵ John 15: 16. ⁶ John 6: 71.
⁷ Matt. 16: 18. ⁸ Ephes. 2: 19, 20. ⁹ Apoc. 21: 14.
¹⁰ Matt. 10: 1. ¹¹ Mark 6: 7. ¹² Luke 9: 1, 2.
¹³ Matt. 10: 5. ¹⁴ Matt. 10: 7. ¹⁵ Matt. 10: 5, 6.
¹⁶ Mark 16: 15, 16. ¹⁷ John 20: 21. ¹⁸ John 20: 22, 23. ¹⁹ John 17: 18. ²⁰ Matt. 28: 18-20.
²¹ Matt. 28: 20. ²² John 14: 18. ²³ John 17: 17.
²⁴ John 20: 22. ²⁵ John 16: 13. ²⁶ John 14: 26.
²⁷ Luke 10: 16. ²⁸ Matt. 18: 17. ²⁹ 1 Tim. 1: 7.
³⁰ Rom. 1: 5. ³¹ 2 Cor. 1: 18. ³² 1 Thess. 2: 3, 4.
³³ 2 Cor. 2: 17. ³⁴ 2 Cor. 5: 19, 20. ³⁵ 1 Cor. 4: 1.
³⁶ 2 Cor. 6: 4. ³⁷ 1 Thess. 2: 13. ³⁸ 1 John 4: 6.
³⁹ Jer. 3: 15. ⁴⁰ Rom. 10: 14, 15. ⁴¹ John 15: 16.
⁴² Heb. 5: 4. ⁴³ Ephes. 4: 11, 12. ⁴⁴ 1 Cor. 12: 28.
⁴⁵ 1 Tim. 2: 7. ⁴⁶ Col. 1: 25. ⁴⁷ Acts 13: 2-4.

⁴⁸ Acts 15:2. ⁴⁹ Gal. 1:18. ⁵⁰ Gal. 2:2. ⁵¹ Jer. 23:21. ⁵² John 10:1. ⁵³ Matt. 15:14. ⁵⁴ 1 Tim. 1:6, 7. ⁵⁵ 2 Tim. 3:1-5. ⁵⁶ Bk. 4, ch. 33, No. 8, Contra Haer. ⁵⁷ De Praescript., ch. 31. ⁵⁸ Gal. 1:8. ⁵⁹ Gal. 1:9. ⁶⁰ Acts 15:41. ⁶¹ Acts 2:42. ⁶² Heb. 13:7. ⁶³ Heb. 13:9. ⁶⁴ Heb. 13:17. ⁶⁵ 2 Thess. 2:14. ⁶⁶ Acts 20:27. ⁶⁷ Matt. 28:20. ⁶⁸ John 14:16. ⁶⁹ Ps. 108:8. ⁷⁰ 2 Tim. 4:1, 2. ⁷¹ 2 Tim. 2:2. ⁷² Titus 1:5. ⁷³ Acts 14:22. ⁷⁴ De Praescript., ch. 32. ⁷⁵ Ps. contra Donat. ⁷⁶ Matt. 16:18. ⁷⁷ Matt. 4:2. ⁷⁸ Matt. 9:15. ⁷⁹ Matt. 6:16. ⁸⁰ Matt. 6:17. ⁸¹ Acts 13:2. ⁸² Acts 14:22. ⁸³ Matt. 16:24. ⁸⁴ Col. 3:5. ⁸⁵ Acts 8:18. ⁸⁶ Acts 8:17. ⁸⁷ Acts 19:6. ⁸⁸ James 5:14, 15. ⁸⁹ Matt. 26:26-28. ⁹⁰ 1 Cor. 11:23-25. ⁹¹ John 6:54. ⁹² 1 Cor. 10:16. ⁹³ 1 Cor. 11:27. ⁹⁴ Mark 10:11. ⁹⁵ Mark 10:12. ⁹⁶ Luke 16:18. ⁹⁷ 1 Cor. 7:10, 11. ⁹⁸ John 13:15. ⁹⁹ Matt. 5:48. ¹⁰⁰ Matt. 19:17. ¹⁰¹ Matt. 19:21. ¹⁰² 1 Cor. 7:7, 8. ¹⁰³ Matt. 19:11, 12. ¹⁰⁴ Jer. 6:16.

VI.

THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE
CHURCH.

THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH.

“A path and a way shall be there, and it shall be called the holy way: . . . and this shall be unto you a straight way, so that fools shall not err therein.” Isai. 35:8.

“And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations: . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.” Matt. 28:18-20.

“He that heareth you, heareth me.” Luke 10:16.

“Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: . . . And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.” Matt. 16:17-19.

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I shall speak to you at this time on the Infallibility. Besides proving the existence and authority of the Church, I have already noticed the attributes which also constitute its four external marks, i. e., Unity, Holiness, Catholicity and Apostolicity. Two more essential properties of the true Church remain for our consideration — Infallibility and Indefectibility.

The Infallibility of the Church is a matter of paramount importance. It is the key to the whole ecclesiastical situation. As soon as we have found the true Church, and have learned that it can not teach us error, there remains nothing for us to do but to listen and obey. The state of anxiety and unrest betokening doubt of mind and unsettled convictions at once vanishes, and peace and contentment and joy and faith abide. Very many persons persist in misunderstanding the dogma of Infallibility, and therefore it is the more important that those who do accept this truth learn also the reasons that support it.

What is Infallibility? Perhaps the right defi-

inition of the word will be best understood if we reach it by telling what it is not. Infallibility is not omniscience, nor revelation, nor inspiration, nor impeccability, nor inerrancy merely consequent. Let me explain each of these terms.

Infallibility is not omniscience. Omniscient means all-knowing. God is omniscient, for He knows everything, past, present and future. There were some who, on the occasion of the definition of Papal Infallibility, raised their hands to heaven and declared that the Church had clothed the Pope with the attributes of God,—because, as they said, if the Pope cannot err he must know everything, he must be all-wise like God. But Infallibility does not imply universal knowledge, it has nothing to do with mathematics, geography, history, philosophy, or the knowledge coming from any of these studies. It is quite compatible with the Infallibility of the Church and of the Pope that the Sovereign Pontiff be not even a learned man.

Infallibility is distinct and entirely different from revelation. Revelation discloses things hitherto unknown. Infallibility has to do with that

which is already revealed. We do not believe that the Church receives a new revelation from heaven, to be communicated daily to the people. When the last of the Apostles departed this life the book of revelation was closed. So St. John could write at the end of the Apocalypse, "If any man shall add to these things, God shall add unto him the plagues written in this book." ¹

Infallibility differs widely from inspiration. Inspiration is a divine influence in a certain act, as, for example, the writing of a book. Inspiration causes certain things to be done, but Infallibility simply keeps one thing from being done. The prerogative of Infallibility makes it impossible for the Church to teach error.

I ought not to be obliged to prove that Infallibility and impeccability are not the same thing. There are, however, persons who persist in confounding these widely distinct terms. Impeccability is the inability not to observe all law binding in conscience. It is freedom from the liability to sin. If the Pope were impeccable, he could do no wrong. The inability to do wrong is an inerrancy in observing law, whereas In-

fallibility is an inerrancy in interpreting and expounding law. It is one thing to teach, and quite another thing to observe and obey. Infallibility has nothing to do with whether the Pope observes law or not. Hence all discussion of the lives of the Popes is not to the point. The disposition to fight the dogma of Papal Infallibility by forging lies concerning the lives of certain Popes, is unworthy of a mind capable of considering a great subject. Providence has, indeed, permitted a few bad men to reach the tiara. That fact argues for the Infallibility rather than against it, since even the bad Popes never taught error in the chair of Peter. If God could keep evil men from error, who should doubt the Infallibility of the just? But let us not make a mistake. That fact also shows that infallible teaching does not spring from the holiness of men, but from the help of God.

Infallibility differs from inerrancy merely consequent. The fact that the Church never has erred does not necessarily prove that it cannot err. The fact that a man has never told a lie is no proof that he is unable to tell a lie. The

Infallibility of the Church is its inability to teach error; though in asserting that the Church cannot teach error, we must hold that it has never done so. Infallibility is *ante factum* — before the fact. It is antecedent to its exercise. It is something in the teacher that prevents the teaching of untruth. An infallible Church does not and cannot teach error.

Essentially, Infallibility belongs to God: for God, of His own essence and nature, can neither deceive nor be deceived. The Infallibility of the Church is an Infallibility by participation. Man of his own nature is not incapable of error, but by reason of a divine assistance, in the circumstances and limitations and proper field of Infallibility, he may participate in the divine prerogative, and so be insured against error. Hence Infallibility may be defined as a supernatural assistance by which the Church is preserved free from error.

If we had no other source of proof, reason alone would demand the doctrine of the Infallibility of the Church. Since Christ is God, and God is true, the Church founded by Christ must teach

the truth. Christ owes it to Himself not to authorize a lie.

Again, no man is bound to submit his intellect to error. The intellect was made to know and believe truth. It is bound only by the truth. If I am bound to hear the Church — that is, to believe the Church and obey the Church — under pain of condemnation, the Church must teach me the truth and command me to do only what is right. Now, we are bound to believe certain things, and to do certain things, in order to attain salvation. The Church is the society which Christ founded for teaching what is necessary for us to believe and what is necessary for us to do. Can we suppose that the Church is unable to do what it was founded for? Infallibility must therefore necessarily belong to the Church.

Cardinal Newman, while still an Anglican, wrote in one of the famous Oxford tracts: "It would be foolish to say that the Church has authority to declare dogmatical points, and yet that she can err. . . . Dogmatical matters appeal to conscience, and conscience is only subject to truth in matters of belief. To say that the Church

has authority, and yet she may err in her declarations, would be to destroy authority of conscience, which every one should hold sacred: it would be to substitute something else besides truth as sovereign lord of conscience, which would be tyranny. If the Church has authority in dogmatical matters, she must be the organ and representative of truth; her teaching must be identified with truth; in one word, the Church must be infallible."

Again, the Infallibility of the Church is proved from the necessity of divine faith for salvation. "He that believeth not," says our Lord, "shall be condemned."² An act of faith is a supernatural act, its certainty is absolute and unconditional. Faith precludes doubt. You may have an opinion, an inclination, a disposition, but can have no faith unless you have absolute certainty. Now even the fundamental truths, the explicit belief in which is necessary for salvation, are of such a nature that they transcend the powers of man's reason. If, then, we must believe something—for example, in the future life, the immortality of the soul, the existence of God and

His attributes, the Incarnation of Christ, or the Atonement — which cannot be proved to absolute certainty by natural reason alone, upon what will we base our absolutely certain act of faith? Has God given us any authority upon which to base our belief as certain? If He has, we have an infallible Church. If he has not, we have no saving faith.

But some one will say, The Bible is that authority and not the Church. I will simply remark here, first, that if the Bible is infallible the Church is infallible, because I will proceed to prove the Infallibility of the Church out of the Bible. And, secondly, if the Church is infallible, as I shall prove, then it follows that the Bible, howsoever excellent in itself, is not the infallible guide and authority of faith. Let the objector choose which horn of the dilemma he likes. The Bible does not prove the infallibility of the Bible. Indeed, we require some other guide to tell us even what is and what is not Scripture. The Catholic rejects certain books and certain passages that others call divine. The Koran is inspired, according to the Mussulman, and Joe

Smith's production is gospel to a Mormon. The doxology of the Lord's prayer, as protestants repeat it, Catholics claim is an interpolation. On the other hand, many books and parts of books which Catholics place in the Canon are rejected by the sects. Who, then, shall be the arbiter? Though the Bible does not prove itself, it does speak clearly for the Church, and proves its prerogatives better than anything else. Let us come, then, to the Bible.

The Scriptures prove that the Church is the infallible teacher of all men. St. Paul, writing to Timothy, calls the Church "the pillar and ground of the truth."³ Can a Church that is liable to err be the pillar and ground — the very foundation and support — of truth? In commissioning His Church, our Lord said to His Apostles: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations."⁴ He said also: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you."⁵ Now I ask, Did the Father send the Son into this world liable to lie? If the Apostles received the same power to teach that Christ had, was not Infallibility

included? Infallibility is surely one of the powers of heaven. Can any one reasonably doubt that it was bestowed on earth? St. Paul, writing to the Ephesians, says: "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, . . . and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: until we all meet into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ." ⁶ How could we become perfect, if the Church were liable to teach us untruth, and if we were bound to believe it? How could the Apostle call the Christians of Ephesus "fellow-citizens with the saints," ⁷ if they were liable to be led into error by the Church? How could the prophet Zacharias, speaking of the Church, call it the "City of Truth," ⁸ if error could find a home in it? How could our Lord say, as He does, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church, if it could be conquered by error? If the Church could teach the world a lie, if it could teach us error, the Devil would laugh: for then he would

have gotten God's instrument of salvation to do his work of damnation.

The Church is infallible because the Spirit of truth is with it. When Christ sent the Apostles into the world, though of themselves they were men with the weaknesses of men, He did not send them unequipped for their great work. He promised them the presence of the Holy Spirit. "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever. The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, . . . but you shall know him; because he shall abide with you, and shall be in you."⁹ Can those who are actuated by the Spirit of truth teach lies? Again our Lord says: "The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you."¹⁰ Once more our Lord says: "But when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth."¹¹ There is no quibbling here, there is no room for a falsehood. The whole truth is to be taught for the salvation of the world.

Again, the Church is infallible because Christ is with His Church and working in it. He sent His Apostles on the most difficult mission that any body of men could undertake. He sent them to make of the world one fold; to make men live in peace and harmony with themselves, and with each other, and with God. He sent them to teach the world what to believe and how to behave. It is a most difficult thing to get even a small number of men to believe or act alike on any question. The Apostles had to face a world steeped in vice, ignorance, superstition and sin, and convert that world to truth and purity and justice. Of themselves they could do nothing, but with the presence and power of Christ they could do all things. So Christ promised His presence. "And, behold, I am with you."¹² If God is with us, who is against us? If Christ is on the side of the Church, who is going to stand in opposition? The Apostles had reason to be timid and afraid because Christ was withdrawing His bodily presence from them, but they were reassured of His spiritual help,—“Behold, I am with you.”

To realize the full import of the phrase, "I am with you," it would be well to notice some, at least, of the other passages in Scripture where these words are found. In Exodus¹³ we read that God wishing to send Moses to redeem the people of Israel from Egyptian bondage, said to him: "But come, and I will send thee to Pharao, that thou mayst bring forth my people." Moses, considering only his own defects, replied: "Who am I, that I should go to Pharao?" Then God assured him of success, saying: "I will be with thee." In the following chapter¹⁴ we read that Moses complained to the Lord because of the impediment he had in speech: "And since thou hast spoken to thy servant, I have more impediment and slowness of tongue." But God said to him: "Go therefore, and I will be in thy mouth; and I will teach thee what thou shalt speak." Did the mission of Moses fail? Again, we have the words of God to Josue, the successor of Moses: "No man shall be able to resist you . . . as I have been with Moses, so will I be with thee: I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee."¹⁵ We read again in Judges¹⁶ that when the Jews

were in distress, because the Madianites had oppressed them, God spoke to Gedeon, their deliverer, and said: "Go in this thy strength, and thou shalt deliver Israel out of the hand of the Madian." Gedeon objected on the ground that he was 'the least in his father's house,' but God said to him: "I will be with thee." And we know how Gedeon prevailed.

We might examine a dozen other passages, containing the same promise, all proving that the words "I am with thee" constitute a pledge of success, because they promise divine co-operation. That the Church is a success in teaching all truth, is what we imply when we claim for her Infallibility. God is with her. She teaches with His authority and cannot lie.

The prerogative of Infallibility in the New Law ought to be inferred from the fact that even in the Old Law there existed an infallible tribunal for settling disputes. In the Book of Deuteronomy we read: "If thou perceive that there be among you a hard and doubtful matter in judgment . . . and thou see that the words of the judges within thy gates do vary: arise,

and go up. . . . And thou shalt come to the priests of the Levitical race, . . . and thou shalt ask of them, and they shall shew thee the truth of the judgment. And thou shalt do whatsoever they shall say that preside in that place, . . . thou shalt follow their sentence: neither shalt thou decline to the right hand nor to the left hand. But he that will be proud, and refuse to obey the commandment of the priest who ministereth at that time to the Lord thy God, and the decree of the judge, that man shall die, and thou shalt take away the evil from Israel.”¹⁷ Could God command acceptance of a false decision? The very attributes of God protest. That judgment, then, must have been infallibly just and true.

Now St. Paul tells us that the Old Law was but a figure of the New. “All these things happened to them in figure.”¹⁸ If there was an infallible authority in the Old Law to settle difficult matters, for greater reason there must be one in the New Law. Can we suppose that Christ’s Church is less perfect than the Mosaic dispensation? And yet our Lord testified to the author-

ity and truthfulness of the teaching body of the Old Law. He says: "The Scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things, therefore, whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do: but according to their works do ye not."¹⁹ Even the high priest who condemned our Lord prophesied rightly, because as St. John says, he was "the high priest of that year."²⁰ If, then, even in the Old Law, 'the lips of the priest kept knowledge, and the people sought the law at his mouth,'²¹ how much more shall the message of Christ be delivered with infallibility.

We know, also, that in every human society there is a court of last appeal that is taken as quasi-infallible. The decisions of our Supreme Court are considered correct. That they be final and irreformable except by the same Court, is necessary for the stability of civil society. But in matters of conscience, a quasi-infallibility does not suffice. The Church is doing a work that demands a real Infallibility, and so the Scriptures testify that God has given it to her.

Moreover, the Apostles claimed the prerogative

of Infallibility. St. Paul says: "We have the mind of Christ."²² "We have received . . . the Spirit that is of God: that we may know the things that are given us from God. Which things also we speak, not in the learned words of human wisdom; but in the doctrine of the Spirit."²³ "For Christ therefore, we are ambassadors, God as it were exhorting by us."²⁴ "For our exhortation was not of error."²⁵ "For we are not as many adulterating the word of God, but with sincerity, but as from God, before God, in Christ we speak."²⁶ And St. John says: "We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us."²⁷ Again St. Paul says: "Therefore he that despiseth these things, despiseth not man but God: who also hath given his holy Spirit in us."²⁸ And again: "When you had received of us the word of the hearing of God, you received it not as the word of man, but (as it is indeed) the word of God."²⁹

"He that heareth you," says our Lord, "heareth me."³⁰ "If he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican."³¹ Are we to be lost because we refuse to hear a lie?

By no means. But we believe without doubt, and hence "we be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." ³² Every Catholic can say, "I am no surer that Christ is not a liar, than I am that the Catholic Church is the infallible teacher of mankind: for it is through the ministry of the Catholic Church that I even know Christ." We know the truth, and we have peace in the truth. Sometimes it seems to me our security in the truth is excessive to a fault. We not only rest in the truth, but we sleep in the truth, instead of arousing ourselves to let others know our good fortune.

Besides one Church, there is no other that claims Infallibility. Now if there is a church that is infallible, it must necessarily lay claim to that title. Every church that disclaims the title gives proof thereby that it does not possess the thing. For in proclaiming its own fallibility, it either tells the truth or it falls into error. If it tells the truth, it is not infallible; and if it falls into error, it is not infallible. The church that denies its own Infallibility cannot be the teacher of all truth.

Our next duty is to locate the Infallibility of the Church, and to discuss its limitations. The Infallibility of the Church can be viewed in two ways, as active or passive,—as active on the side of the teaching body, as passive on the side of the hearing body. The Church is infallible in believing as well as in teaching. “Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema.”³³ “If any one preach to you a gospel besides that which you have received, let him be anathema.”³⁴ The passive Infallibility is a result of the active Infallibility. The faithful receive the truth because the Church teaches the truth. Hence our Lord says, “The sheep follow him, because they know his voice. But a stranger they follow not, but fly from him.”³⁵ The Church is infallible, then, even in hearing.

Now the active Infallibility of the Church can be viewed in different ways. The Church is infallible in her daily teaching throughout the world. Those things that are taught always and everywhere are infallible truths. Again, General Councils are infallible. By a General Council

we mean not merely a lot of bishops assembled, but the Bishops with the chief Bishop, the Pope. The Pope is the head of every General Council, and a Council cannot be a general Council without its head. Both the Infallibility of General Councils and the Infallibility of the whole teaching body are consequent on the Infallibility of the head, with which the Bishops and teachers are united. Hence, the Papal Infallibility is the real Infallibility of the Church. "Let no man seduce you, . . . walking in the things which he hath not seen, in vain puffed up by the sense of his flesh, and not holding the head, from which the whole body, by joints and bands, . . . groweth unto the increase of God." ³⁶

Now what is Papal Infallibility? In the Acts of the Vatican Council, 4th Session, Constitution 1, concerning the Church of Christ, Chapter IV., we read: "The Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when he performs the office of pastor and teacher of all Christians, and by his supreme Apostolic authority defines a doctrine as of faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, possesses, through the di-

vine assistance promised to him in Blessed Peter, that Infallibility with which the Divine Redeemer wished His Church to be endowed in defining doctrine, whether of faith or morals."

The limitations of Infallibility fall under four heads. First, the person in whom Infallibility resides; second, the persons to whom infallible teaching is directed; third, the subject-matter of Infallibility; and, fourth, the form of infallible utterances.

First, the Pope is infallible when he speaks in his official capacity to the whole Church, whether directly or indirectly. Second, a decision, to be infallible, must be intended for all the faithful, whether addressed to all or to a particular person. Third, the subject-matter of Infallibility must be a doctrine of faith or morals. All the revealed truths come under this head. Likewise all theories of government or of science that have to do with faith or morals, and finally all dogmatic facts that are necessarily connected with revealed truths, belong to the domain of Infallibility. Fourth, the intention of the Pope and the form of expression tell us whether the Pope speaks *ex cathedra* or not.

We prove the Infallibility of the Pope if we prove the Infallibility of Peter. I need not waste words to show that the Pope is the successor of Peter. The world cannot get rid of that truth. Papal succession is a glaring fact, that no man who knows history can gainsay. If, then, Christ made Peter the head of the Apostles, and gave him the prerogative of Infallibility, so that in his official capacity he was to be the unerring teacher of the whole Church, it follows that the Pope of the present day is also infallible.

As soon as our Lord selected Peter, He marked him out in a special manner for the office of Pope. Peter's brother Andrew met our Lord first. He came to Peter and said: "We have found the Messias." Then he brought Peter to Jesus, and Jesus looking upon him said: "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas,"³⁷ which is the Syro-Chaldaic for "Peter" or "rock." Our Lord gave him a new name, a name which signified his office as the foundation of the Church. God never gave a new name without a purpose. He changed the name of Abram to that of Abraham. Jacob was

changed to that of Israel. Our Lord's own name, Jesus, was meant to show forth the Saviour. God says, "To him that overcometh, . . . I will give . . . a new name."³⁸ We must conclude, then, that Christ meant something when he bestowed the name "Cephas" on Simon.

Later on in our Lord's life He conferred on Peter both the Primacy and the Infallibility.³⁹ "And Jesus came into the quarters of Cesarea Philippi; and he asked his disciples, saying: Whom do men say that the Son of Man is? But they said: Some John the Baptist, and other some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. Jesus saith to them: But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered, and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Our Lord praises Simon for that profession of faith. "And Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona," — There were two Simons in the Apostolic College — "because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter." Here Christ alludes to the name given years before. He brings

it up again. "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." In English the full force of our Lord's words do not come out. The identity of "Peter" and "rock" is not obvious. But in the language which our Lord used there is only one word for both Peter and rock — "Thou art *Cephas*; and upon this *cephas* I will build my church." The English does not express this identity. The French, however, is faithful to the original,— "Tu es Pierre, et sur cette pierre je bâtirai mon Eglise." Who can deny that Christ thus made Peter the foundation of His Church?

If Peter is the foundation of the Church, can he be swept away by error and lies? What is to be the fate of the Church if its foundation can be destroyed? If Peter is not infallible, the Church is not infallible. If the Church is not infallible, the gates of hell can prevail against

it. If the gates of hell can prevail against the Church, the words of Christ are false. If Christ's words are false, Christianity is a sham. See where we are landing! Anyhow, Peter is the foundation of Christ's Church, according to Christ's words. Therefore we must recognize a Church of which Peter is the foundation. To do so is to be a Catholic.

In the passage already quoted, we see that our Lord commits to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Everywhere the keys signify power and authority. Christ says of Himself in the Apocalypse: "I . . . have the keys of death and of hell."⁴⁰ Peter has authority over the kingdom of heaven. But how could this be said if he were not an infallible guide to those who would enter heaven?

Throughout the New Testament Peter is given the place of prominence. His name leads in every list of the Apostles.⁴¹ St. Peter was the first to perform miracles after the Ascension of our Lord. He was the first to address the Jews after the descent of the Holy Ghost. He was the first to make converts from the Gentiles.

When a successor was to follow Judas, it was Peter that spoke, and only Peter, to appoint the new member. In the First Council of Jerusalem, Peter's was the principal speech. There was, of course, "much disputing," but when Peter spoke all "held their peace."

Let us notice. James was Bishop of Jerusalem. He was a cousin of our Lord, a very near and dear disciple. James was cast into prison, and was finally put to death. But was there any extraordinary commotion made about him among the Churches? We have no evidence that there was. Peter, too, was put into prison, but mark the difference! "Prayer was made without ceasing by the church unto God for him,"⁴² until an angel from God delivered him. In the same manner the world to-day sends up prayers for the deliverance of the Pope.

It is worthy of note, too, how the Scriptures, in speaking of Peter, distinguish him above the rest. "Simon, and they that were with him."⁴³ "Peter, and they that were with him."⁴⁴ "Peter standing up with the eleven."⁴⁵ "Peter and the apostles answering, said."⁴⁶ The translators of

the King James' Bible have corrupted this last text, inserting *other* before the word "apostles." They must have felt that the text was conclusive of Peter's pre-eminence, that Peter was something more than a mere Apostle.

But some one who has been reading his Bible will exclaim: Did not St. Paul withstand Peter to his face?⁴⁷ I would advise such a one to read that passage again, and read it carefully. Instead of arguing against the pre-eminence of Peter, it argues for it. Peter was at fault, and Paul withstood him. The incident gets its importance only by reason of Peter's pre-eminence. Besides, elsewhere St. Paul acknowledges Peter's superiority. He went up and tarried with Peter fifteen days.⁴⁸ He consulted him on his teachings, as he said, "lest perhaps I should run, or had run in vain."⁴⁹

It is also a noticeable fact that Christ taught the people out of Peter's ship. He ordered the same tribute coin to be paid for Peter and himself. On the night of His last supper He prayed especially for Peter, that his faith should not fail, and that he should be the means of confirm-

ing his brethren.⁵⁰ Our Lord said: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you" (meaning all the Apostles), "that he may sift you as wheat." The Devil wanted the whole Church. "But I have prayed for *thee*" — for Peter alone — "that *thy* faith fail not." Peter's faith cannot fail because Christ's prayer is an efficacious prayer.—At the tomb of Lazarus Christ said: "Father, I give thee thanks that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always."⁵¹ We have something still further, for our Lord continues: "And thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren." The brethren do not confirm Peter, but Peter confirms them. The Bishops do not make the Pope sure, but the Pope makes the Bishops and the faithful sure. Now how could Peter confirm his brethren in the faith if he could err in the faith?

The promises and preparations for the Primacy and the Infallibility, which were begun with the bestowal of a characteristic title, were all fulfilled before our Lord's Ascension. A short time before our Lord left this earth, He said to Peter:

“Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these?” Peter believed that he loved his Master, but since his sad denial of Him he had learned not to presume. At that time he said, “Although all shall be scandalized in thee, I will never be scandalized.”⁵² But, humbled by his fall, he does not say that he loves the Lord more than the rest, but he answers simply, “Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.” Then our Lord said to him: “Feed my lambs.” Again our Lord asked him the same question, and He received the same answer, and said again: “Feed my lambs.” A third time our Lord put the question to Peter, “Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?” Peter was troubled, but his heart was right and true, and he replied: “Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee.” Then said Christ to him: “Feed my sheep.”⁵³ What is it that constitutes a flock? Is it not lambs and sheep? The flock of Christ consists of pastors and people. Peter is empowered to feed the whole flock. We shall know if we are truly of the flock of Christ if we get our spiritual food from Peter.

But some will say, A mere man cannot be

infallible. We answer, The Pope is but the organ of the Holy Ghost. Could not God have made Peter infallible? If you say he cannot make a poor, weak, sinful man an infallible teacher of His truth, then I ask you to explain how comes it that the evangelists, in writing the books of the New Testament, were infallible? Or again, if the Pope is not infallible, how do the evangelicals say that every regenerate soul is infallible,—

“And every saint has to himself alone

The secret of the philosophic stone”?⁶⁴

According to evangelicals, every man is infallible in interpreting the Bible, but when the Pope tries his hand at it he is invariably wrong!

Though history does not demonstrate the dogma of Infallibility, it fails to destroy it. That no doctrinal error has ever been taught by the Church creates a presumption and a strong probability that she is endowed with a power that guards her from error. If the Church could be proved to have erred in the past, the claim of Infallibility would be overthrown. But all the ingenuity of her enemies has been unable to point out one

error in her doctrine, or one contradiction in her *ex cathedra* declarations. All the hammering of heresy and infidelity has never struck one spark of falsehood from the rock of Peter. "This is the rock over which," says St. Augustine, "the proud gates of hell prevail not."

"O gracious God! how well dost Thou provide
For erring judgments an unerring guide!
Thy throne is darkness in the abyss of light,
A blaze of glory that forbids the sight.
Oh, teach me to believe Thee thus concealed,
And search no farther than Thyself revealed;
But her alone for my director take,
Whom Thou hast promised never to forsake."⁵⁴

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⁴ Matt. 28:18, 19. ⁵ John 20:21. ⁶ Ephes. 4:
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28:20. ¹³ Exod. 3:10-12. ¹⁴ Exod. 4:10, 12.
¹⁵ Josue 1:5. ¹⁶ Judges 6:12-16. ¹⁷ Deut. 17:8,
et seq. ¹⁸ 1 Cor. 10:11. ¹⁹ Matt. 23:2, 3.
²⁰ John 11:51. ²¹ Mal. 2:7. ²² 1 Cor. 2:16.
²³ 1 Cor. 2:12, 13. ²⁴ 2 Cor. 5:20. ²⁵ 1 Thess.

2:3. ²⁶ 2 Cor. 2:17. ²⁷ 1 John 4:6. ²⁸ 1 Thess. 4:8. ²⁹ 1 Thess. 2:13. ³⁰ Luke 10:16. ³¹ Matt. 18:17. ³² Ephes. 4:14. ³³ Gal. 1:8. ³⁴ Gal. 1:9. ³⁵ John 10:4, 5. ³⁶ Col. 2:18, 19. ³⁷ John 1:42. ³⁸ Apoc. 2:17. ³⁹ Matt. 16:13-19. ⁴⁰ Apoc. 1:18. ⁴¹ Matt. 10:2; Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13. ⁴² Acts 12:5. ⁴³ Mark 1:36. ⁴⁴ Luke 9:32. ⁴⁵ Acts 2:14. ⁴⁶ Acts 5:29. ⁴⁷ Gal. 2:11. ⁴⁸ Gal. 1:18. ⁴⁹ Gal. 2:2. ⁵⁰ Luke 22:31, 32. ⁵¹ John 11:41, 42. ⁵² Matt. 26:33. ⁵³ John 21:15-17. ⁵⁴ Dryden.

VII.

THE INDEFECTIBILITY OF THE
CHURCH.

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“With the joy of the whole earth is mount Sion founded, . . . the city of our God: God hath founded it for ever.” Ps. 47: 3, 9.

“This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My spirit that is in thee, and my words that I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth, and for ever.” Isai. 59: 21.

“And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Matt. 16: 18.

“And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded on a rock.” Matt. 7: 25.

* * * * *

This is the last discourse of our series on the Church. From the beginning my purpose has been to say those things that would enable a sincere soul to know the marks and properties of the Church, and to distinguish the true faith from everything that is false. Hundreds of discordant creeds are clamoring for acceptance. If we know the marks of the true Church, and then fail to find the Church, we have only ourselves to blame.

I am well aware of the short-comings — or, if you please, the long-comings — of my efforts. My task has been a serious one. My words were not meant to amuse. I have made no appeal but to your sincere convictions. I have asked you only to be true to the light, true to conscience and true to yourselves. I am happy to know that what I have said has been helpful to some, who have signified their purpose of studying thoroughly the doctrines of the Church. It is an axiom well known to every one that, in His wisdom, Almighty God has ordained that the same golden opportunity shall never knock twice at one door. A fearful silence

follows the neglect of heaven's calls, and an appalling darkness succeeds the abuse of heaven's light. "Keep thyself, therefore, and thy soul carefully. Forget not the words that thy eyes have seen, and let them not go out of thy heart all the days of thy life." ¹

* * * * *

I will speak to you now on the Indefectibility of the Church. Indefectibility belongs to the essence of the Church. It means not only that the Church has never failed, but that it cannot fail. Indefectibility asserts, in spite of all opposition, the duration of the Church up to the end of the world, with all its powers and properties, both internal and external, as it was at first constituted and endowed by Christ.

Indefectibility includes two thoughts: perpetuity and immutability. Perpetuity of the Church has reference to the continuous and unbroken existence in time. It does not mean that some fragments of Christianity, battered and broken and scattered, will survive here and there, but it asserts that the Church which Christ founded upon His Apostles will continue to flourish, vivifying a

dead world by its supernatural life, dispelling the world's darkness by its holy light, and performing in perfection all the functions of the Church of God to the end of time. As I have already shown that the Church which is called Catholic is, indeed, the identical society that Christ founded, I mean now to assert, and presently to prove, that it is perpetual and immutable,—yea, indestructible, indefectible.

The Catholic Church alone has had a continuous being from the time of the Apostles to the present day, without the slightest alteration or innovation in faith or in any article of revealed truth. Her adversaries have acknowledged her ancient existence. They cannot assign a time short of the Apostolic age in which she began to be, although they do contend that she has changed from something else to what she is. Some say the change took place in the sixteenth century, others point to the fifth, others to the fourth, others to the third or the second, while a few claim that her mutation is very modern, dating from the definition of Papal Infallibility. The Church laughs at these jarring judgments, for, as she was the true Church

when St. Paul wrote to the Romans,² "Your faith is spoken of in the whole world," she never could cease to be the same. The rule of faith which she follows, the promises of her Divine Founder, unimpeachable history in every age, the literature and monuments of Christian antiquity which still remain,—even the heresies that have been broached, and the schisms that have broken away, and the futile efforts of her enemies to show her fall or failure, all prove her still extant and still the same. The perpetuity of the Church is nothing but her catholicity in duration, it is her unity and identity in time.

The dictates of common sense, together with a knowledge of man's religious needs, and the purpose and aim of Christ in instituting the Church, logically prove that the Church ought to be perpetual. The Church ought to endure as long as there is work for it to do, as long as souls are to be saved, as long as there lives a man who needs to be taught the message of truth. The Church was founded for saving souls, its charter and commission extend to the last surviving son of Adam. Therefore must it endure. Its marks, too, must be

knowable and known, and all its powers by which it can perform its mission must remain.

We mean no more than this when we assert that the Catholic Church is indefectible. Let the Church lose but one of its essential qualities and mark the result! For example, deprive it of its Apostolic authority, which is its essential form of government. There remains no longer any efficient principle of unity. The Church then ceases to be a society. If we substitute another ruling principle instead of Apostolic authority, the whole entity is changed. We have no longer the same society. It has ceased to be the Church of Christ. Again, take away the Infallibility, and no extrinsic bond of unity or of faith remains. If we change, destroy or subvert the principle of the deposit of faith, what becomes of the burden of belief, the mind and soul of the Church? Where shall we find sanctity when faith, the beginning and the root of justification, can be tampered with, rejected or destroyed?

He who came "a priest for ever,"³ and a sacrifice for all men, a mediator for all men, wished His Church to be perpetual. If we con-

sult the predictions and promises, whether of the Old or the New Testament, the Scriptures proclaim the perpetuity and immutability of the Church. "A child is born to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder," says Isaias.⁴ "His empire shall be multiplied, . . . he shall sit upon the throne of David, . . . to establish it, . . . from henceforth and for ever." Three things are asserted here: first, the coming of Christ; second, the establishment of his kingdom; and, third, that his kingdom is to endure forever. Again: "I will make a perpetual covenant with them," says Isaias,⁴ — "not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, . . . the covenant which they made void," says Jeremias.⁶ The Jews made void the ancient covenant. The new covenant differs from it in this, that it cannot be made void. The Church of Christ is called the city of God. So the Psalmist says: "As we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God hath founded it for ever."⁷ The Church is called "A mountain in which God is well pleased to dwell," says the Psalmist again,

“for there the Lord shall dwell unto the end.”⁸ The prophet Daniel predicts the perpetuity of the Church when he says, “But in the days of those kingdoms, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, . . . itself shall stand for ever.”⁹ The eighty-eighth Psalm is full of the perpetuity of the Church. Verses thirty-six to thirty-eight are as follows: “Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will not lie unto David: his seed shall endure for ever. And his throne as the sun before me: and as the moon perfect for ever, and a faithful witness in heaven.”

The Church was not only promised and foreshadowed as perpetual, it was asserted as capable of withstanding all opposition. It will overcome all the powers of the enemy. Hence it is indefectible. Isaias says: “For the mountains shall be moved, and the hills shall tremble: but my mercy shall not depart from thee, and the covenant of my peace shall not be moved. . . . I will lay thy stones in order, and will lay thy foundations with sapphires, and I will make thy bulwarks of jasper: and thy gates of graven stones, and all thy borders of desirable stones. All thy children shall

be taught of the Lord. . . . And thou shalt be founded in justice. . . . No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper: and every tongue that resisteth thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn.”¹⁰ Again he says: “And the children of them that afflict thee, shall come bowing down to thee, and all that slandered thee shall worship the steps of thy feet, and shall call thee the city of the Lord, the Sion of the holy One of Israel.”¹¹

Such are the prophetic words of the Old Law. The picture is complete. The Church is foreshadowed as perpetual and invincible.

The New Testament is even more explicit and more emphatic. First, it foretells the perpetuity of the Church, the kingdom of Christ. St. Luke says: “He . . . shall be called the Son of the most High, . . . and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end.”¹² So our Lord says in St. Matthew: “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”¹³ Three things, again, are predicted here: first, that Christ will build His Church; second, that the powers of hell will oppose His Church; and, third,

that these powers can never triumph over His Church. Now if the Church were not infallible, immutable and indefectible, these things could not have been said. If the Church could cease to be, if it could change from the truth, if it could teach error, the powers of hell would prevail over it. "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word," says St. Peter, "which by the gospel hath been preached unto you."¹⁴ The judgment of Gamaliel was right, "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought. But if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it."¹⁵

Those who said that the Church was sunk for eight hundred years in damnable idolatry must have forgotten the promises of God. The Church cannot fail in any way,—neither in extension, nor in action, nor in aim. We have seen that Christ promised the help of the Spirit of truth to His Church.—"I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever."¹⁶ The Holy Ghost dwells in the Church much as our soul dwells in our body. It is by the perpetual indwelling of the Paraclete that the Church is preserved one, holy

and catholic, infallible and indefectible. Men tend to separation, men disagree, men are weak. The human side of the Church is full of sin. If it were not for the divine help vouchsafed to the Church, what a mess man would make of it! The members, and even the ministers of the Church, can claim but little credit for its progress and its preservation. Human wisdom is not the cause of its propagation. On the contrary, it flourishes in spite of human faults. The greatest obstacle the Church experiences is from its own unworthy members. Speaking to me on this matter recently, a gentleman said: "Father, leaving aside the opposition which the Church encounters from without, the prejudice, the ignorance and the enmity of her adversaries, I think, if the Holy Ghost were not with her, we could sink the old ship ourselves." He spoke the truth. The existence of the Church is a perpetual miracle of God's power and presence.

We have already seen another reason for the Indefectibility of the Church in the promise of the presence and assistance of our Saviour.—"Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation

of the world.”¹⁷ Again, three important points are presented here. First, the presence of Christ is promised to His Church — “I am with you;” second, His continual presence is promised — “I am with you all days;” third, His perpetual presence is promised — “I am with you . . . even to the consummation of the world.”

There remains an *argumentum ad hominem*, as logicians say, for the perpetuity of the Church. The fact that each of the sects outside of the Catholic Church claims to be in some sense the Church of Christ, is proof against them that Christ’s Church in some way still exists, and is likely to persist and be perpetual. All we need to add to make the proof of Indefectibility complete is to show that the Church is also immutable.

The Church which the Scriptures say will last to the end of time is Christ’s Church. If it were mutable it would not remain, for if it should change essentially it would lose its identity. But Christ’s Church must prevail. Therefore it cannot change in its essential features. The babe is small at the beginning, it grows in youth and advances to old age, but remains the same person.

The Church can grow in size, increasing in membership and territory; its truths can be explained, its doctrines can be defined and developed,—it is like the minute mustard-seed of the Gospel, that expands into a tree and spreads its branches out till every bird of the air finds shelter on its boughs,—but the Church changes not in essence; it remains the same, immutable.

Christ's Church is immutable because it is perfect. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do,"¹⁸ said our Lord. "All things whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I have made known to you."¹⁹ There was to be no tinkering with truths revealed. Christ left a church and a message that needed no patching to be perfect. True, the Apostles before the first Pentecost were weak and stupid; they did not comprehend the full force of Christ's message. But the Holy Ghost was promised to supply for their frailty. "The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, . . . will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you."²⁰

Change in the Church, if such a thing were possible, would come about either by addition or

diminution in the deposit of faith, or by cessation in the constitution or organization of the Church. But neither of these has taken place. Those who say the Church changes, because they notice a new definition of doctrine, or a new development or energy put forth, forget that the Church is like that householder mentioned by our Lord, "who bringeth forth out of his treasure new things and old." ²¹ To define a doctrine is to be exact in teaching it, but to teach does not mean to invent. The Church in every age has defined doctrines, but she has never invented any. The doctrine of Christ's Divinity was defined in the Council of Nice, in the year 325. The unity of Christ's Personality was defined in the Council of Ephesus, 431. The dogma of the immortality of the human soul was not defined until the Fifth Council of Lateran, 1512. While the dogma of the Personality of God was undefined until the Vatican Council, which also defined Papal Infallibility, in 1870. To those who charge the Church with adding to the deposit of faith when she defines any doctrine, we answer in Dryden's words:

“The ancient doctrines charged to her as new
Show when and how and from what hands they grew:
She claims no power, when heresies grow bold,
To coin new faith, she but declares the old.”

Her faith to-day is “the faith once delivered to the saints,”²² for which St. Jude exhorts us to contend earnestly. The truths that Peter and Paul preached are those that are taught and believed in the Catholic world to-day, “according as they have delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word.”²³

Nor has the constitution of the Church been altered, neither has its organization suffered any essential change. The Church is that house built by the wise builder on a rock, “and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell not.”²⁴

The commoner objection, however, against the Catholic Church is, not that she changes or has changed, but that she cannot change. They say she is superannuated, her faith is fossilized, she is an old foggy, a back number, she cannot keep

up with the times. We are glad to concede that the Church is remarkably conservative, and yet it is easy to prove that she is progressive. Though in herself she is perfect, and nothing can progress beyond perfection. The Church began with an admirable organization, and she has retained it intact. She began with a complete creed, and she has kept it complete. As Christ commissioned His Church to teach us to 'observe all things whatsoever He had commanded,' the Church has never hesitated to impart the whole truth. St. Paul calls the clergy of Ephesus to witness that he had not failed to declare to them "all the counsel of God."²⁵ He anathematizes any one who teaches a doctrine different from that which he preached.²⁶

The watchfulness of the Church over purity of doctrine has been remarkable in all ages. Some have called her solicitude intolerance, but it is not an intolerance of truth. Witness the words of St. Paul to Timothy: "Hold the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me in faith. . . . Keep the good thing committed to thy trust by the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in us."²⁷ "I charge

thee," he says, "before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, by his coming, and his kingdom: preach the word; be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine." ²⁸ And so he admonishes Timothy personally to persevere: "Continue thou in those things which thou hast learned, and which have been committed to thee: knowing of whom thou hast learned them." ²⁹ And he tells Timothy what to do that the Church may persevere in the same teaching: "And the things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also." ³⁰

There is no "wind of doctrine" here. The ancient faith does not shift its moorings with every wavelet of the world. The Church is not panic-stricken at every fad or fancy that arises upon the horizon of thought, nor does she bow in obedience to every tyrant who holds up his thumb. Outside of the one true fold everything fluctuates. "They vary," says Bossuet, "hence they err." They vary because they lack the stability of truth. "The religious thought of the time," says Mr.

H. K. Carroll, United States Census Agent for Church Statistics, in an article in the *Forum* on the stability of the religious sects,³¹ "does not run along the lines of the Westminster and Belgic Confessions or the Thirty-nine Articles. These symbols," he says, "are not despised, they are held in veneration; but nobody would hasten to do battle for them as they were defended when they represented the living faith of the churches." Another writer, the Rev. W. B. Hale, in the same magazine, puts approvingly into the mouth of a Catholic these remarkable words: "There is on earth but one body which is firm in the midst of the storm. It stands like a rock defying and beating back the waves. It is the Catholic Church. All the contests of men over spiritual things are at bottom this, a contest between faith and the refusal to have faith. We stand for faith." This same writer, in another article,³² makes an argument which proves that protestantism, if allowed to run its course, is bound to reveal itself as unchristian. He says: "It is a negative which presumes the existence of something besides itself. Protestantism cannot exist unless there is some-

thing against which to protest. It recognizes that 'something,' appeals to it, confesses it a prior fact every time it names its own name. . . . Its wickedness is that it does not, and cannot, anticipate the extinction of that against which it protests, for in that extinction the possibility of protestantism would become extinct." And he continues, "May not this pursuit of its logic do something towards reclaiming us from our infatuation with a pernicious principle? . . . How long do we propose to continue playing into the hands of the papal Church by yielding to it the most noble of appellations, and contenting ourselves with the most ignoble?" Mr. Hale is trying to rally the scattered sects, in order to form a Catholic Church out of the many fragments. His appeal is a cry of distress which the prophet Jeremias answered long ago: "Thy own wickedness shall reprove thee, and thy apostacy shall rebuke thee. Know thou, and see, that it is an evil and a bitter thing for thee, to have left the Lord thy God."⁸³

And so we see the Indefectibility of the Church is proved by the prophecies and predictions of both the Old Testament and the New, by the prom-

ises — yea, and by the prayers — of the Divine Founder of the Church ; by right reason, also, and by the virtual consent of all classes and creeds.

Lastly, let us look at the impregnable Church herself. There she stands, one of the greatest facts in all history.—“ A mighty bulwark against the wild, raging and destructive forces in the social life,” says Dr. Parker. “ A glorious Church,” says Dr. Schaff. “ She was the *alma mater* of the barbarians of Europe ; she stimulated and patronized the Renaissance, the printing press, the discovery of the New World, and she still stands like an immovable rock bearing witness to the fundamental truth . . . and to the catholicity, unity and unbroken continuity and independence of the Church, and she is as zealous as ever in missionary enterprises and self-denying works of Christian charity.”

Mr. Gladstone says of the Church:³⁴ “ She has marched for fifteen hundred years at the head of civilization, and has harnessed to her chariot, as the horses of a triumphal car, the chief intellectual and material forces of the world ; her art, the art of the world ; her genius, the genius of

the world; her greatness, glory, grandeur and majesty have been almost, though not absolutely, all that in these respects the world has had to boast of. Her children are more numerous than all the members of the sects combined; she is every day enlarging the boundaries of her vast empire; her altars are raised in every clime, and her missionaries are to be found wherever there are men to be taught the evangel of immortality and souls are to be saved. And this wondrous Church," he continues, "which is as old as Christianity, and as universal as mankind, is to-day, after its twenty centuries of age, as fresh and as vigorous and as fruitful as on the day when the Pentecostal fire was showered upon the earth."

"I persist in thinking," says Matthew Arnold,³⁵ "that Catholicism has, from this superiority," — he is speaking of the unity of the Church, which he claims has a wonderful attraction towards Rome for all minds, — "a great future before it; that it will endure while all the protestant sects dissolve and perish."

A minister of a protestant church³⁶ said recently: "In Rome I learned, as I never before

had, to think that that faith which saw the very inception of the highest civilizations which flourish to-day would not be abolished by the designs of men of our own time. For good or for ill, the Roman Catholic Church is here to stay."

Another expresses himself as follows: "Is it too much to say that if Roman Catholicism were the tissue of positive lies, doubtful statements and ingenious artifices which it is often called, the fact would be patent and clear as daylight? Systems supported by enthusiasm or tyranny, fanaticism or fraud, never resist the spear of Ithuriel; truth prevails. But the criticism of three centuries has done nothing to make it impossible for an honest scholar to be a Catholic; and it is hardly extravagant to say that the criticism of this century has done more to shake men's faith in all other forms of Christian belief than in the Catholic."

Of old the pagan and Jewish establishments assailed the Church. The Moslem in the East and the Moor in the West joined issue with her. Heresy and schism did not spare her. Pride and passion rose up to oppose her sway. Disloyal

and unworthy children have forsaken her. The so-called philosophies of the world — infidel, agnostic, liberal — have grappled with her, only to fall fainting at her feet. The tooth of time has not corroded her. The wiles of the wicked one have not found her weak. “Why have the Gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together, against the Lord, and against his Christ.”³⁷ But “He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them: and the Lord shall deride them.”³⁸

The Church has had its trials and tribulations, and it must expect to have them to the end. Our Lord clearly foretold all this. “If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.”³⁹ “In the world you shall have distress: but have confidence; I have overcome the world.”⁴⁰ The Church is symbolized by the ship of the Apostles, which, as St. Matthew tells us,⁴¹ was storm-tossed on the sea of Genesareth. The clouds may sometimes lower, the storm come on, the sea run high, but Christ is in the boat. With a word He stills the tempest, the waves subside, and the

boat sails safely on to port. There are those who fear for the fate of the Church in stormy times, but Christ is with her still, nor does He sleep: His promises cannot fail.

The enemies of the Church have not only plotted her downfall, but predicted it. Luther, in his "Table Talk," page 331, says: "The Pope stands like a tottering wall about to be overthrown." And again, page 196: "The Pope is the last blaze in the lamp, which will go out and ere long be extinguished." Such was Luther as a prophet. But time has had its own revenge. A few years ago there died at Berne, Switzerland, the Rev. Dr. Franz Hierschwalder, a lineal descendant, on his mother's side, of Dr. Martin Luther. Father Hierschwalder was Catholic Professor of Systematic Theology in the Swiss University.

In 1840 Carlyle wrote: "Popery can build new chapels — welcome to do so to all lengths. Popery cannot come back any more than paganism can, which also still lingers in some countries. But indeed it is with these things as with the ebbing of the sea — you look at the wave oscillating hither and thither on the beach; for a

minute you cannot tell how it is going. Look in half an hour and where is it? Look in half a century where your Popehood is." Now more than fifty years have passed since Carlyle's prediction, and more than three hundred since the prophecy of Luther. Carlyle is dead and Luther is dead, but the Church to-day is greater, grander, stronger than ever, and the Pope's spiritual sway grows wider and deeper year after year.

Dryden's couplets on the Hind summarize the situation:

"Yet had she oft been chased with horns and hounds,
And Scythian shafts and many winged wounds
Aimed at her heart; was often forced to fly,
And doomed to death, tho' fated not to die."

Were it not for the fact that the Church is perpetual and impregnable, but few of her assailants would be known to the world to-day. Even the names of the arch-heretics would be lost to history if the Church did not teach them to us. Like the great mother earth that shelters the flora and fauna of past ages in her bosom, the Church tells us what shapen things her enemies were. She is the amber that preserves the fly.

Some have thought that the temporal power was the prop and mainstay of the Catholic Church, and so they said: Take away the papal patrimony and the Church must die. The states of the Church have been confiscated, and behold the people of the world turn to the throne of Peter with more affection than ever!

But, say others, let us upbuild the secular school. Let us turn to the physical sciences. A widely diffused knowledge of nature will destroy her supernatural claims. But the Church takes gladly whatever bit of truth science can produce, as a basis to prove her higher propositions. She will illuminate her halls with whatever light science can give. Material progress will but subserve her ends. Steam and electricity will help to speed her message. The sons of the Church will not be found last nor least in the roll of every science. Astronomy, they said centuries ago, was going to do the Church to death. To-day how looks it? Are not the foremost in the starry field sons or priests of Rome? Let Perry, Secchi, Proctor and Searle stand for their kind. In later years it is geology or biology that will destroy

the Church. But let us wait. Even the stones shall cry out in confirmation of truths revealed. Can truth kill truth? The Church that survived the heresies of old, and sees the later ones already languishing by the way, is not going to be frightened at the hoot of every owl that through the glass of science scans the noon-day sun and shouts, Where is it?

To use the words of another, "The Church marches on in the majesty of her power, beauty and benignity, not as a conquering hero puffed up with pride and unapproachable dignity, but with arms extended to receive all of God's children, for whose spiritual welfare she is ever engaged. She has opened her doors to all comers, irrespective of race or color. To the poor and humble she is especially indulgent. Even to her greatest persecutors she holds out the palm of peace. She is easily recognized: her distinguishing marks are Unity, Holiness, Universality and Apostolicity."

It has become a fad of late to speculate on what shall be the coming faith, the religion of the future. If any one shall ask you what will

be the creed of the world in years to come, answer : It will be the Catholic creed, which cannot change and cannot cease to be. The Catholic Church is the immovable, the indivisible rock. The force of evil cannot shake her, the chisel of malice cannot take from her one chip. She is the invincible rock. On her in vain hell's iron bars will break in splinters. Against her sides the sea of error and of hate may swell and rage, till each proud wave that strikes her base is beaten into spray.

“There is not, and there never was on this earth,” says Lord Macaulay, reviewing Ranke's “History of the Popes,” “a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church. The history of that Church joins together the two great ages of human civilization. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when camelopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace

back in an unbroken series from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth. . . . The republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigor. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the farthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustin, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age. . . . Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished in Antioch, when idols were still wor-

shipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigor when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."

Again he writes: "Four times, since the authority of the Church of Rome was established in Western Christendom, has the human intellect risen up against her yoke. Twice that Church remained completely victorious. Twice she came forth from the conflict bearing the marks of cruel wounds, but with the principle of life still strong within her. When we reflect on the tremendous assaults which she has survived, we find it difficult to conceive in what way she is to perish."

But the Church cannot perish. She is the flower that blooms perennially, through the power and presence of God.

Hail to the indefectible Church!

One in faith, in worship and in rule;
Holy — without a wrinkle, spot or stain;
Catholic in territory, time and truth;

Apostolical in doctrine, orders and authority;
 Visible — a light that never can be hid;
 Infallible in things of faith and morals, and
 Immutable, impregnable, perpetual, —

“the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” ⁴²

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